

THE COGNITIVE-DEVELOPMENT THEORY OF LAWRENCE KOHLBERG
AS LEADING TO AN INTERACTIVE DEVELOPMENTAL TOOL
FOR MORAL GROWTH IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
A. ORIGIN OF PROJECT	1
B. PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT	2
C. INTENTION	4
D. METHODOLOGY	5
II. THE COGNITIVE-DEVELOPMENTAL THEORY OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT	8
A. COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENTALISM	8
B. PARALLEL AND FOUNDATIONAL THEORIES	11
Freud	11
Erickson	12
Dewey	12
Piaget	16
Behaviorism	19
C. IMPACT OF PARALLEL THEORIES ON KOHLBERG'S WRITING	20
D. KOHLBERG'S INFLUENCE ON CONTEMPORARY MORAL THEORY	23
III. KOHLBERG'S THEORY	26
A. DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL	27
Moral Development	27
Dysfunctional Behavior	36
Individual Characteristics in Testing and Observation	38
B. MORALITY IS DEFINED IN TERMS OF RATIONALITY . .	41
C. JUSTICE	43
D. THE CHURCH AND MORAL EDUCATION	47
IV. CONTEMPORARY CRITIQUE OF KOHLBERG'S THEORIES	50
A. MORAL STAGE DETERMINATION	50
B. MORAL TESTING PROCEDURE	54
C. THE KOHLBERG STAGES	55

Chapter	Page
V. LIMITS AND LEARNING FROM KOHLBERG'S THEORY AND ITS CRITIQUE	60
A. LIMITS	60
B. LEARNING	65
VI. A TOOL FOR MORAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE LOCAL CHURCH	78
A. IMPLICATIONS OF THE THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENT . . .	78
B. LAKE OSWEGO UNITED METHODIST CHURCH SETTING . . .	80
C. EMERGENCE OF A TECHNOLOGICAL FORM: MICRO- COMPUTER	86
D. A TENTATIVE DEVELOPMENTAL PROCEDURE	94
E. CONSTRUCTING FAIRWITNESS	101
F. FAIRWITNESS METHODOLOGY	109
VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	123
BIBLIOGRAPHY	127

ABSTRACT

Focus:

This paper critiques dominant contemporary theories of moral development. The paper concludes with the initial testing of a videotape/computer process for enabling moral development of adults in both local church and other group settings.

The primary theory critiqued is "cognitive-developmentalism," as developed by Lawrence Kohlberg. Other theorists considered include Piaget, Erickson, and Dewey. Behaviorism and social theory are presented in contrast to the heritage of developmentalism leading to Kohlberg's writings.

Process:

After compiling all available works of Kohlberg, contemporary comments on his writings were reviewed. The critique of cognitive-developmentalism is presented in (a) theoretical and procedural inconsistencies, (b) contradictory data from parallel studies, and (c) conduct of a means of extending moral development beyond the limits of Kohlberg's writings to encompass persons of all ages.

Conclusions:

Moral development occurs interactively. Moral development can occur at ages beyond adolescence and early adulthood as determined by Kohlberg. The assumption of moral rigidity in moral

judgment has serious, negative ramifications for educational programs and curricula built upon cognitive-developmentalism.

Moral development can be facilitated through the use of FAIR-WITNESS, the first applied videotape/computer process for group interaction. A further conclusion related to the use of this level of technological experimentation is that the local church can be a center for innovation leading to enhancement of decision making by its participants.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

A. Origin of the Project and Organizing Principles

This project began as a response to the concept of "moral development." The initial question was neither "What is moral behavior?" nor "Who will make that determination?" Rather, when defined by individuals and groups, "What are the ways in which that moral behavior can be enhanced?" Can it be enhanced? What are the tools or insights for facilitating moral development in the local church?

The question of moral development occurs in relationships. In an attempt to be more moral or more ethical, individuals seem to be asking for two kinds of information beyond the specific content of moral issues: for evaluation and for enablement.

In order to change or to determine that change is called for, persons need evaluation. This usually means a person giving individual or collective subjective appraisal of another person. One attendant dilemma is who, after all, is to be trusted in making such an evaluation? Friends may color their comments in one direction, adversaries in another. How are the evaluations to be communicated? Another dilemma is that the person making the evaluation, or asked to make it, must decide if the other person wants evaluation or if reinforcement is wanted. If evaluation is called for, what will effect significant change and what will result only in antagonism?

In moral evaluation, commonplace procedures are so opaque as to let through little light. When shortcomings are exposed, the return is rarely formed response and growth. In moral development the first quality, and attendant dilemmas, concern evaluation or "feedback."

The second quality of moral development with which this project is concerned is "enabling." Once evaluation has been made, however clear or unclear, how does one change? What is the way to move from the present to a more desirable future? These questions would imply first asking where one wants to go--what one's objectives would be. However, the immediate concern of the study is to define the process of moral development. Once persons receive feedback, they wish to respond. They want directions, beyond, to wherever they are going. This seeking direction is "feedforward." The dilemmas of this quality of moral development are formidable. Not only must a way of getting directive information be obtained and personally tested, but the evaluative process must continue during testing and implementation of new behavior resulting from the feedback and feedforward. Enabling is not a single event. It is a continuing process as moral growth is experienced.

Evaluation and enablement are dynamic qualities of moral development. Evaluation is given more credence as enabling accompanies it. Enablement is actualized as positive evaluation continues. Feedforward offers hope with feedback. Feedback validates feedforward.

B. Personal Involvement

My personal involvement in this project originated in an attempt to develop a systematic understanding of moral development

and a format of feedback and feedforward for individuals in the church. If successful, the project would result in a procedure which related to persons and their needs. If moral development is essentially a relational question, feedback and feedforward would have to occur and impact relationships.

The project was designed with the Christian community in mind. The local church is deeply committed to a variety of moral statements, or norms. These norms emanate from a basic perspective of humanity and divinity. It might be argued that the church has been more interested in stating than in developing values. It is more difficult to develop moral behavior than it is to define what is moral.

How can the local church move from stating values to assisting people in evaluation and direction for moral growth? Whether or not the church has a conscious concept of moral development, it lives by one. When a person says, "I'm too old to change," he is making a statement about the nature of moral development as it relates to the church. What do the concepts of moral development we live by say about educational programs for youth and adults? What do they say about worship? About the administration and conduct of groups, from finance meetings to fellowship groups?

There is an imperative to understand the nature of moral development and to develop feedback and feedforward procedures. The imperative extends beyond the local church. In 1975, I studied with Dr. Howard Ham, Director of the Division of Education for the United Methodist Church. Dr. Ham noted that moral development was the basis for new curriculum resources which were to be designed for the

national church, and that a person currently having much influence on this program was Lawrence Kohlberg.

Dr. Ham further noted that anyone serious about moral development as a discipline would need to take Lawrence Kohlberg seriously. Kohlberg has developed an institute concerned with moral development at Harvard University. Either using Kohlberg's methodology and relating it to the moral development of the local church, or rejecting it and knowing why one rejected it, would be a first step in having an impact on moral development and practice.

With this background and concern, the present study was undertaken to understand moral development, to relate it to life situations, to apply it within the local church, and to juxtapose the study findings with a dominant theory impacting the national church.

C. Intention

The first intention of the study is to relate to the local church the cognitive-developmental theory of moral growth as defined by Lawrence Kohlberg. This encompasses an overview of prevalent theories of moral development. The second intention is to develop a tool to actualize the relationship between moral growth and the needs of the local church. We are aware of theories of moral growth. We are abundantly aware of problems in the local church. What is a specific, repeatable tool which can enliven theory in relation to the local church--a tool that works?

D. Methodology

The methodology for the study falls into three categories: research, critique, and design. The Educational Research and Information Clearinghouse (ERIC) system was used to compile information about the writings of Kohlberg and related and divergent theories. ERIC is a national depository for all information on education written and accepted for filing.

Using Lockheed information retrieval service, called DIALOG, a computer search was made for all ERIC documents using two descriptors, "moral development," and "Lawrence Kohlberg." The search was conducted by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory and included all education, psychology and social science abstracts. Of the 537 documents included on the printout, 214 abstracts were obtained. Through purchase of relevant documents on microfiche, a comprehensive personal library by or about Lawrence Kohlberg and in the field of moral development was obtained. The results of this research are described in Chapters II and III, "The Cognitive-Developmental Theory of Moral Growth" and "Kohlberg's Theory."

To develop the second category of methodology, "Critique," I relied upon contemporaries working in the field of psychology and education for an appreciation of the positive and negative impressions of Kohlberg's work. Beyond that, I attempted to relate the theory to my experiences within, and to the needs of, the local church. From this comparison there were both discernible areas of strong reinforcement and areas of irreconcilable differences in concept and in application. This is described in Chapters IV and V, "Contemporary

Critique of Kohlberg" and "Limits and Learning from Kohlberg's Theory and its Critique."

From the critique of the theory of moral development came a related but distinct theory and the final category of methodology, "Design." The theory is then applied to the needs of the local church.

The application is seen first in past work with videotape feedback in church groups. That feedback guided application for development of a further tool--computer and videotape together facilitating moral development of individuals in the local church.

The development of this tool necessitated its own methodology beginning with a study of other research and application which would be parallel. Institutions doing similar work were contacted and sharing established.

Because of the unique nature of the computer-videotape tool for actualizing the defined theory of moral development, the methodology by necessity included acquisition of equipment and expertise in the use of the equipment. This was established both on a short- and long-range basis. Even if equipment effective in feedback and feedforward could be obtained to test a theory of moral development, its impact would be reduced if the equipment was not available.

Part of the design category of the methodology was to establish long-term evaluation of the computer-videotape tool. While short-term evaluation would be necessary, long-term variable evaluation would also be part of the initial design and implementation of the project.

This was the origin, intention, and method of the project. It could not have been undertaken without the assistance of several key

individuals and organizations. Special appreciation is given to Dr. Howard Ham for encouragement to undertake the study; to Peter and Trudy Johnson-Lenz, for their unselfish assistance in writing the program to implement findings of the study; to the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry and the Portland office of the International Business Machines Company, for assistance in the developmental phase of the design; to Helen Lamb and OCRI Foundation Board members for providing equipment allowing design implementation and testing; and, to David Mesirow for thoughtful critique and assistance in development of the computer-videotape application. It is my hope and commitment that the results of this project will continue to reward the moral development of individuals within the church and will justify the faith and effort of the persons mentioned.

Chapter II

THE COGNITIVE-DEVELOPMENTAL THEORY OF MORAL GROWTH

"Developmentalism" is a way of describing moral growth.

"Cognitive-Developmentalism" is the term Lawrence Kohlberg uses to describe his contribution to moral theory. It is also a term which describes the school of thought influenced by Kohlberg's approach. What is cognitive developmentalism and how can it be compared and contrasted with other theories of moral growth?

A. Cognitive-Developmentalism

Cognitive-developmental theorists are concerned with what it means to be human. What is human nature? Is human nature also moral nature?¹ The cognitive-developmental theorists seek to answer this through empirical observation of individual and group behavior. Through this examination, they have derived several generalizations about moral growth that define, at least in part, the nature of humanity. The theorist observes:

. . . once a person has offended the norms, and has been publicly defined and labeled as 'undesirable' or 'dangerous' there is high probability he will be treated in those terms. As a consequence, he may find himself locked into stigmatizing situations, usually under confinement.²

¹ Educational Testing Service, Moral Education: Development of a Model (Princeton: 1972), p. 9.

² Educational Testing Service, p. 7.

Three statements are related to this observation. First, while moral growth takes place and in many ways is circumscribed by society, such as through labeling, change occurs individually. Despite a person's role in society, how he is cast and confined, the person can attain higher or lower states of moral development.³ This may happen without assistance from external sources, but is enhanced by them.

Second, conflict can produce growth. Some stage theorists such as Kohlberg argue that unless there is conflict there can be no growth. In describing cognitive-developmental theory, the Final Report of the Educational Testing Service at Princeton, notes:

. . . it is possible to facilitate individuals' rate of moral development by helping them experience the type of conflict that leads to a greater awareness of the great adequacy of the next highest stage and concomitantly communicating at directly above the child's current level of thought. This has commonly been referred to as the cognitive developmental approach to education.⁴

Creating conflict with the means of resolving ethical choices on the level that a person operates on and then showing how a different stage would resolve the conflict, causes a person to assimilate the higher view. The assumption about human nature is that we cannot live with irreconcilable conflict and will change ways of making moral decisions to bring about internal harmony. Again as in the first point, the focus is upon the individual. What the individual sees, feels, as in conflict, produces impetus for change.

³Rodney P. Allen, "But the Earth Abideth Forever: Values in Environmental Education," Environmental Education Curriculum Project, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, in Health, Education and Welfare Document ED 099 300, April 1975, p. 8.

⁴Educational Testing Service, pp. 2-3.

The second quality of the cognitive-developmental theory, that of conflict leading to change, implies a third quality: stages of moral development. Cognitive-developmental theory is sometimes called stage theory. In 1972 Kohlberg delivered a paper to the American Psychological Association in which he stated:

The type of orientation we call stages are not values or value orientations in the sense of classes of preferred content, of what is chosen. We distinguish between the content of value judgment and the structure of value judgment. The structure of value judgment is the way in which the individual judges and chooses and reasons, the reasons behind his choice.⁵

The stages are not necessarily differences in conclusions or specific actions, but differences in ways the conclusions are reached, rationale behind actions. The stages are represented in actions, but are defined by structure of thought processes. This is why the stage theorist places so much importance on causing change--growth in moral development through reasoning behind moral decisions. Persons can be taught to restructure their moral decisions, in a more effective, constant way. What has not yet been noted is what defines "high" and "low," and what is more effective.

Why is the cognitive-developmental theory not termed simply "the stage theory"? First, there are other kinds of stages posited by other theorists, and second, as written by Robert Selman, "Children structure or organize their experience; each general restructuring or reorganization of experience is called a 'cognitive stage.'"⁶ It

⁵Lawrence Kohlberg, "American Psychological Association Values Symposium paper," U.S. Health, Education and Welfare Document ED 069 413, 1972, p. 8.

⁶Robert L. Selman, A Developmental Approach to Interpersonal and Moral Awareness in Young Children (Boston: American Montessori Society, June 1974), p. 1.

is not simply that there are stages of moral development, but that moral development is defined by cognitive stages. A cognitive stage is determined by the structure of one's moral decision.

Defining more closely the characteristics of the cognitive-developmental theory requires tracing the heritage which underlies it. We need to examine the theoretical contribution to the cognitive-developmental theory of Freud, Erickson, Dewey, and Piaget.

B. Parallel and Foundational Theories

Freud. The writings of Sigmund Freud influence the cognitive-developmental approach. Freud wrote of stages just as Kohlberg, but they were biological stages. The impact of Freud's prior writings has been expressed as:

These 'stage theorists' seek to combine the power of Freud's notions of inevitable genetically-triggered sequences of development with an approach that incorporates variables derived from envioning circumstances.⁷

There is within each person a propensity toward development, change, and growth--a natural and, concomitantly, moral growth. It is a high view of humanity. Taking seriously the quote on "labeling" which also comes from the stage theorist school, cognitive-developmentalists also stress that the environment can either assist or retard that natural ethical development. A qualification on the above quote is with the word "genetic." The inevitability of natural human moral development for the stage theorist would be less the genetic structure of the individual and more the cognitive process of seeking consistency and

⁷Educational Testing Service, p. 6.

reconciliation. It is less a biological function, as suggested in relation to Freud, and more a rational function. This does not mean that a rational person, for the stage theorist, would be more moral than a less rational person, only that they could attain to a higher level of moral decision making.

Erickson. The stress upon environmental factors associates cognitive-developmental theorists such as Kohlberg with Eric Erickson.⁸ The environment influences moral growth. Altering the environment can enhance the development of an individual. This aspect is not confined to one people, but is a transcultural phenomenon. Like Erickson, Kohlberg is interested in a universal formula, process, procedure for moral development. Cultural specifics may vary, but the developmental process of morality is a constant.

Dewey. The power of the cognitive-developmental theory begins to emerge. It speaks about enhancing a natural cognitive process characteristic of all persons. Refinements of the general founding of this theory are found in the writings of John Dewey.

A first contribution of Dewey is that there must be a unity of moral and intellectual education. Edmund Sullivan commented that "Dewey lamented the separation of intellectual and moral training" ⁹ If one begins with the assumption that moral decision making is based upon structures of the intellect, structures which are

⁸ Educational Testing Service, p. 20.

⁹ Edmund Sullivan, A Developmental-Interactionist Perspective to Moral Values (Boston: American Montessori Society, June 1974), p. 3.

malleable, a person would be morally remiss in not being thoroughly committed to enhancing that intellect. Dewey perceived that education should relate value decisions and structures with other disciplines as definitive of fundamental education.

It is interesting to reflect upon today's educational system compared with these views of John Dewey, the person most often associated as the father of the American educational system. In noting the disparity between Dewey's vision and the reality of generally value-minimizing public education (at least in Dewey's sense of unity in subjects), Kohlberg also notes a second contribution of Dewey to the cognitive-developmental theory:

While Dewey clearly saw that education should be the supplying of the conditions of development through sequential cognitive and moral stages, 70 years of American educational psychology did nothing to aid Dewey's vision. Instead, it followed Thorndike's direction and viewed cognitive education as a matter of instruction and behavioral learning and moral education as a matter of transmitting culturally accepted values and behavior.¹⁰

Dewey conceived that the posited stages of moral development were sequential and, for Kohlberg, inviolable. A person could reason in any instance beyond the stage in which he lived, beyond even one stage above or below his level of moral reasoning, but that would be a rarity. Persons almost without exception value out of one single stage of moral development, and may vary at most one level above or below in specific reasoning situations. The above quote from Kohlberg is taken from a presentation delivered to the National Council for

¹⁰ Lawrence Kohlberg, "Moral Development and the New Social Studies," paper presented at the meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies, Boston, November 23, 1972, pp. 1-2.

the Social Studies. Immediately following those comments, Kohlberg made the interesting comment:

You are fortunate enough to have the world's most distinguished representative of its Thorndike tradition, B. F. Skinner, to speak to you later. For today, it is my job to present the major alternative vision of education, the cognitive-developmental tradition of Dewey. This tradition emigrated to Piaget's Switzerland where it was vastly enriched, and has now returned to this country and flourished this last ten years.¹¹

For Kohlberg the lines are clearly drawn. From the tradition of Dewey there is the positing of an authentic, real value orientation that is transcultural. On the other hand is cultural relativism of values, essentially represented in the tradition of Thorndike and embodied currently in the work of Skinner. In this context, the theories described are of no mean consequence. Advocacy of one position or the other has apparent, significant ramifications for the society in which one lives. One is the area of public education as it relates to values. As will be examined in Kohlberg's writings later, it also embraces one's approach to the judicial and legal system of society.

A final major contribution of John Dewey to the cognitive-developmental approach to moral growth is postulates of moral growth. Kohlberg distilled Dewey's thought into "six basic postulates." In specific, Kohlberg related the postulates to the new social studies; they also tell of the general stage theory. The six postulates are:

¹¹Kohlberg, "Moral Development," p. 2.

1. Replacement of rote-learning with active thought and reasoning.
2. Recognition of the difference between the content of thinking and the process or form of thinking.
3. Interdisciplinary approach to education.
4. Centrality of the problematic case, use of relevant concrete cases representing social problems.
5. The role of value judgments in social studies; the need for clarification of values (the value clarification movement stems from this postulate).
6. The need to focus on situation, not problematic but controversial.¹²

What is the impact of these postulates? They result in the general method of evaluation and experimentation of the cognitive-developmental theories. Stress on active thought and reasoning is the logical result of a cognitive approach to moral decision making. Rote learning would not be ethical or non-ethical, simply a-ethical. The stage theorists are not as interested in the particular ethical decision reached as the process by which a person makes the decision. The use of specific cases which are concrete and controversial is the basis for the style of examination adopted by Kohlberg to determine the moral level of an individual. As Kohlberg has noted, Dewey is the progenitor of the basic material of the cognitive-developmental theory. Kohlberg also mentioned the role of Piaget and his influence upon this theory. From the above quote on the tension between Dewey and Thorndike, it is clear that for Kohlberg, Piaget took Dewey's initial work and developed

¹²Kohlberg, "Moral Development," pp. 4-7.

it further. What are the contributions of Piaget?

Piaget. A first area of Piaget's work is associated with the nature of moral judgment. One dimension of moral judgment for Piaget is "rules." John Orr has written:

For Piaget, to speak about moral judgment is to speak about social rules. . . . Piaget's assumptions . . . arbitrarily delimit the kinds of judgment that will be taken seriously as examples of moral judgment. For example, Piaget and subsequently his American colleagues [Orr is referring to Kohlberg] apparently do not consider affective/creative/meditative dimensions of human experience as having moral significance, although a substantial romanticist tradition within the history of ethics has located the essence of the moral life precisely there.¹³

It is not the objection to Piaget's work which is of interest at this point, but the contrast between measurement of decision-making structures by a set standard with what Orr terms the "romanticist" tradition which cringes at the thought of measuring values or moral growth. Piaget set forth standards for levels of moral thinking.

Contrary to Orr's analysis, social rules, while imperative for Piaget, are not definitive of his views of moral judgment. Another area of Piaget's contribution to the cognitive-developmental approach is that of peer control, or at least, influence. It has been defined above that there are a series of moral stages through which individuals pass. It has further been stated that passage through these stages can be affected positively or negatively by the environment. Piaget defined at least as part of that environment

¹³ John Orr, "Cognitive-Developmental Approaches to Moral Development: A Social Ethical Analysis," U.S. Health, Education and Welfare Document ED 095 999, 1973, pp. 5-6.

(for him the most critical element) as peer influence: " . . . autonomous morality arises from the child's interaction with his peers."¹⁴ This assumption and conclusion of Piaget's work led to careful examination and recording of patterns of, for example, play among children. What factors produced moral development? Could they be altered?

It has been noted that there is natural growth; also, that growth comes from conflict, of the need to reconcile that which currently cannot be reconciled. Piaget affirms that this autonomous moral development, this creative conflict, occurs primarily in peer relationships. For Piaget, the moral judgment of the child is formulated and reformulated in interaction with others. One of the first statements in reference to the origin of this study, was that the issue of moral development is essentially relational. The moral dilemma occurs in relationships. For Piaget, the moral answer grows out of and within relationships. When the classic example of Kohlberg's testing procedure is examined for determining moral development, it will be a relational question. For the cognitive-developmental perspective, moral growth cannot be separated from involvement with others.

Piaget contributed the importance of social rules and the role of peer influence to the cognitive-developmental theory. He also established the basic procedure for interview and scoring which characterizes work in this field.

¹⁴Sullivan, p. 9.

Piaget in 1932 presented children with a series of paired stories centering on a moral issue and asked the children to make judgments as to the naughtier action and the extent of culpability.¹⁵

From this Piaget developed a two-stage theory: a heteronomous (objective) stage based on the ethics of authority and an autonomous (subjective) morality which is egalitarian and democratic.¹⁶ While the two stages are of interest, the primary value was the procedure of (1) verbal interview, and (2) scoring based on verbal description and weighting (rather than on a "right" or "wrong" response). The process of ranking various persons in a story recounted to the children emphasizes not necessarily the final ranking, but the reality of relationship in the concept of moral decision making as viewed by the cognitive-developmental theorist. This same procedure of verbal inquiry and independent scoring of reasoning processes is used by Kohlberg.

Piaget qualified his research in a way which is not characteristic of Lawrence Kohlberg. Piaget felt that his method was limited to a general indication of moral judgment and would possibly be limited to children and not applicable to the determination of moral decisions of older youth or adults.¹⁷ Despite his own stated limitation, Piaget made a significant contribution to the cognitive-developmental approach to moral development. His work is reflected in content and method by the work of Kohlberg. Piaget's peer

¹⁵ Sullivan, p. 8.

¹⁶ Sullivan, p. 8.

¹⁷ Jean Piaget, The Moral Judgment of the Child (New York: Collier, 1962), p. 181.

influence became social rules, which in turn are translated by Kohlberg into six stages of moral development.

Behaviorism. There is a clear alternative to the cognitive-developmental theory which developed parallel to it; it may be termed "behaviorism." One defining characteristic of behaviorism is the theory of operative conditioning which is essentially that the motive for moral behavior is reward-seeking. To adjust human behavior, reward the person, positively or negatively, for variations in action.¹⁸ The cognitive-developmental theory urges that the motive for human behavior is competence. Persons want confirmation by others, for example approval, but essentially act moral based upon internal satisfaction that conflict in perspective is consistent and correct. The cognitive-developmentalalist considers "rewards" as of lower moral stage on the part of an individual. The person who stands on principle opposed to the culture of which he is a part is a paradigm for the cognitive-developmentalalist and aberration for the behaviorist.

A second primary quality of behaviorism is "continuous operant reinforcement" to achieve operant conditioning. This implies there is nothing innate about moral stages or moral development. When a person behaves as desired, that behavior must be reinforced to be continued. As the 1972 Education Testing Service states:

The leading opponents of the stage theorists are the radical behaviorists. They make no assumptions about irreversibility or permanence, or intrinsic structures. Rather they think in terms of continuous operant reinforcement as a requisite of continuous behavior on a

¹⁸ Educational Testing Service, p. 4.

given level of conduct. Less in opposition to the stage theorists are the social theorists who see much more variability, less hierarchy, less inherent structure, if any at all, and much more dependence of moral growth upon social and psychological nutrition and indoctrination.¹⁹

The testing service comparison and contrast of these major theories resulted in the statement, "In our judgment, none of the three major schools of thought has a sufficiently decisive edge in conceptual clarity or weight of evidence."²⁰ The importance of these distinctions is that the dominant options to the cognitive-developmental approach are essentially that there are no fixed stages and that either moral judgments are the result of operant conditioning or they are the results of indoctrination. Inherent search for reconciliation, operant conditioning, and social indoctrination are the dominant motifs for moral development.

C. Impact of Parallel Theories on Kohlberg's Writing

How does the writing of Lawrence Kohlberg fit into this contention of theories? Before developing fully his theories of moral growth, some general observations about Kohlberg and his work should be noted.

The paragraphs above suggest that Kohlberg is an extension of a philosophical movement in education and social science. In the unity of moral judgment and intellect he relies upon the work of Dewey. In the interview method he works from the prior effort of

¹⁹ Educational Testing Service, p. 28.

²⁰ Educational Testing Service, p. 4.

Piaget. In this sense, his work is a continuation of the prior work of others.

Kohlberg also has gone beyond the work of Dewey and Piaget.

An example is in the age of subjects. Sullivan has noted:

Kohlberg's work is a more sophisticated extension of Piaget. Unlike Piaget, whose research is based on the young child, Kohlberg's normative model is derived from late elementary school students to adults.²¹

This is exciting for the local church. We are now not talking exclusively about value formation among children; we are, provisionally, talking about value reformation among older youth and adults.

Kohlberg is also unwilling and uninterested in limiting the application of his method as Piaget. Kohlberg is not interested in research for general trends. He is interested in a model which can be applied--one that can be used with persons to tell them something. In presenting Kohlberg's view, it is informative to quote an advocate of Piaget, Philip Smith, who has written:

As Piaget [in contrast to some of his followers] clearly recognized . . . pedagogy is very far from being a mere application of psychological knowledge. Apart from the question of the aims of education, it is obvious that even with regard to technical methods it is for experiment alone and not education to show us whether methods such as that of work in groups and of self-government are of any real value. For, after all, it is one thing to prove that cooperation in the play and spontaneous social life of children brings about certain moral effects, and another to establish the fact that this cooperation can be universally applied as a method of education.²²

²¹Sullivan, p. 10.

²²Philip G. Smith, "What is Moral Education?," Viewpoints, LI:6 (November 1975), 24.

While Piaget and his contemporary advocates are hesitant, Kohlberg is aggressive. If a theory is to be used, apply it. As we will see, Kohlberg's work rests not in experimental application, but in life-involvement with others.

Kohlberg's clearest contribution to the cognitive-developmental theory is in the standards he has set for determining moral maturity. Piaget formulated two general stages of moral development: authority based decisions and independent decisions. Kohlberg developed six universal stages. In the introduction to their critique of Kohlberg's position, William Kurtines and Esther Blank Grief emphasize this contrast between Kohlberg and his predecessor.

. . . whereas for Piaget moral maturity is attained when an individual capable of autonomous reasoning (for most people, around age 12), for Kohlberg moral maturity is defined as the capacity for principled (stage 6) reasoning, is reached by very few people. Individuals who attain²³ this level of moral reasoning do so in their late teens.

For Kohlberg, while the developmental process is universal and inexorable, the attainment of the highest standard of moral reasoning is not universal. There is great incentive through application of the environmental and relational methods for enhancing moral decision making. The standards for moral reasoning which Kohlberg developed are both more complex and more challenging than those of his predecessors.

These are the general points of contribution and interface of Kohlberg and his heritage. It is an interesting heritage and one

²³William Kurtines and Esther Blank Grief, "The Development of Moral Thought: Review and Evaluation of Kohlberg's Thought" Psychological Bulletin, LXXXI:8 (August 1974), 454.

which calls for serious response to the issues Kohlberg raises and serious questions as to the basis for his theories.

D. Kohlberg's Influence on Contemporary Moral Theory

Kohlberg has begun to have an impact on the work of others. The potential impact upon the United Methodist curriculum has been noted. Kurtines and Grief note the great amount of research generated by Kohlberg and date his impact beginning with his doctoral thesis in 1958.²⁴

Kohlberg's work has been tested. For example, a major project in Ontario, Canada assumed the validity of Kohlberg's theory in development of public school educational goals. The Ontario project was concerned with unifying value clarification with the regular school curriculum in the 1970's. Three reasons given for adopting Kohlberg's theory were:

1. It allows for emphasis on improving environmental factors.
2. It is developmental [where one has been and where one is going can be measured].
3. It helps in specification of educational goals.²⁵

This means that Kohlberg's contribution to cognitive-developmental theory encourages persons to do something to improve moral decisions (point 1); provides a tool for feedback and, theoretically, feed-forward (point 2); and, through the six categories, establishes a hierarchy which is definitive of educational goals in value education (point 3).

²⁴Kurtines and Grief, p. 453.

²⁵Sullivan, pp. 16-17.

Kohlberg's stages of moral development have been compared with Loevinger's stages of ego development. The intention of the study (undertaken at Illinois State Psychiatric Institute, Chicago, report published in 1972) was to demonstrate if "individuals who score high on ego development will score high on moral development. . . ." ²⁶

Harold Lambert, author of the comparison document, wrote: "Kohlberg's test of moral development was developed over a decade ago and has been successfully used in a variety of studies." ²⁷ It is interesting that, as in Ontario and at the Illinois State Psychiatric Institute, Kohlberg's theories and stages were used and accepted as valid. At the Psychiatric Institute, Kohlberg's theories were used to test the validity of Loevinger's theories!

Kohlberg has already had a substantial impact on concepts of moral development. While he is an extension of the past history of persons such as Dewey and Piaget, he has made developmental theory far more interesting. It is a challenge to institutions such as the church, which are founded upon sharing and living moral decisions, to examine Kohlberg carefully. His approach is stimulating because it relates not only to children, but to all persons. It is stimulating because it can be used in life situations, not in experimentation alone. It is stimulating because it affirms that moral

²⁶Howard Lambert, "Comparison of Cognitive-Developmental Theories of Ego and Moral Development, Illinois State Psychiatric Institute, Chicago (Washington: American Psychological Association, September 1972), p. 1.

²⁷Lambert, p. 1.

judgment education does matter, does make a difference, and can be successfully undertaken. This is the crux of the challenge of Kohlberg as applied to the local church.

Chapter III

KOHLBERG'S THEORY

Kohlberg's theory will be presented in four categories:

(1) development of the individual, (2) rationality as necessary for morality, (3) justice, and (4) the church and moral education. The general heritage of cognitive-developmental theory and the contribution of Kohlberg are related in the first three categories. The fourth category, the church and moral education, is not a major theme of Kohlberg's theory. Kohlberg's perception of the church is included to portray his vision of how the developmental process can be socially enhanced. If after describing how moral growth occurs, Kohlberg concludes that the church has a minor role in the depiction of moral growth, such a conclusion is of primary importance to this project--in fact, this is the case. How and why Kohlberg reaches this conclusion is found in his identification of the process of moral growth.

A. Development of the Individual

The development of the individual in Kohlberg's writings can be broken into three subcategories: moral development, its nature and characteristics; dysfunctional behavior; and individual characteristics in testing and observation.

Moral development. For Kohlberg the individual naturally moves from one level of moral judgment to another. The skill in moral development is to create the condition for that natural movement to take place.¹

Qualities of Kohlberg's stages: How is this movement defined as a progression? How is one stage higher than another? "It takes as a hypothesis for empirical confirmation or refutation that development is a movement toward greater moral adequacy. . . ." ² What Kohlberg is affirming is that persons change rationally toward integration of opposites--reconciliation of conflict, and that this is always a greater moral adequacy. That movement and development of the individual is toward integration. Kohlberg has written:

Moral judgment is primarily a function of rational operations. Affectional factors such as the ability to empathize and the capacity for guilt necessarily enter in, but moral situations are defined cognitively by the judging individual. Moral development is therefore a result of an increasing ability to perceive social reality or to organize and integrate social experience.³

This does not mean that ability to reason will produce principled morality. Reason is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for principled morality.

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, "The Contribution of Developmental Psychology to Education--Examples from Moral Education," address to the American Psychological Association, Division of Educational Psychology, Washington, September 1971, p. 1.

²Kohlberg, "The Contribution," p. 27.

³Lawrence Kohlberg, "A Cognitive-Developmental Approach to Moral Education," Humanist, XXXII (November-December 1972), 15.

For reason to apply to moral decisions there must be differences in values which can be perceived by individuals. Moral development has been described as individual movement from one level to another, environmentally enhanced, through use of reason. How are these stages established? Kohlberg affirms a "cognitive-developmental research strategy" as opposed to a "attitude-strength research strategy" in describing and analyzing individual and group differences in values.

The attitude-strength approach starts with a set of classes of objects of values, or more abstract dimensions or elements of values and asks 'How strongly is this class of objects or acts valued or preferred by an individual?' Variations in strength of preference then define a quantitative dimension on which individuals or cultures may be ordered and compared.⁴

Kohlberg is opposed to the attitude-strength position. The assumption of attitude-strength theorists is that the cognitive component of individuals is constant while the affective varies. Kohlberg terms "extremely dubious" the attitude-strength concept that "a situational choice is determined by an individual according to the mathematical balance of the strength of two (or more) values competing in the situation."⁵ He further writes:

This assumption . . . is extremely questionable in light of what is known about the situational determinants of choice. A great range of studies indicate that one cannot predict from measures of attitude and value strength to actual situational behavior.⁶

⁴Kohlberg, "American Psychological Association Values Symposium Paper," U.S. Health, Education and Welfare Document ED 069 413, 1972, p. 2.

⁵Kohlberg, "American," p. 11.

⁶Kohlberg, "American," p. 15.

Kohlberg is stating the disparity between professed and lived values. Paired preference in testing finally tells us only the results of the paired test and nothing about the behavior of the individual being tested beyond the parameters of the test itself. How does Kohlberg's posited "cognitive-developmental research strategy" differ?

Our phenomenological postulate is exemplified in the fact that instead of asking subjects only for a predefined action choice or for a rating of preference, we asked him to structure the dilemma himself and to explain why and how he would make a choice in the situation. We . . . attempt to find out how the individual structures the dilemmas.⁷

For Kohlberg, determination of the moral developmental stage of the individual is not reflected in choices among moral alternatives, but the framework which an individual brings to a series of data: how the person organizes the data and, once structured, how the weighting of values is attributed to the information.

What about the stage sequence? If a stage of individual moral development is defined by a framework for organizing and ordering value-based information, what are the qualities of those stages? For Kohlberg, a first statement would be that the stages are invariant.

Kohlberg posits the invariance of his stages by stating, ". . . development [of the individual] is defined by a psychology of invariant ordered sequential stages."⁸ James Leming notes the stages of moral development:

. . . have been verified by an eighteen-year longitudinal study of fifty American males interviewed every three years

⁷Kohlberg, "The Contribution," p. 2.

⁸Kohlberg, "The Contribution," p. 2.

from ages ten to twenty-eight. The study indicates that all go through the same sequence of stages. While the rate of development of the stages and the terminal point of adult development are different for different individuals, the nature and order of the stages of moral thought are the same for all.⁹

And, "The cultural universality of the stages and their order has been confirmed in a number of cross-cultural studies including a longitudinal study in a Turkish village."¹⁰

Not only does Kohlberg hold to the invariant view of his stages, but that the stages are intrinsic as well. They all occur in all cultures in all persons. They are not culturally transmitted. Moral development is definitive of part of what it means to be human.¹¹

If the stages are invariant and intrinsic, how comprehensive is the ability to discern the level of operant stages in the life of individuals? Each person is at one category or another, at one stage in his moral reasoning or another.

People do not really vary in quantitative degree of possession of a structure. Structure is an all-or-none phenomena. This does not mean that an individual may not have more than one structural system, he may be a 'mixed type.' But mixed types should not be construed as quantitative variations on a dimension.¹²

⁹James Leming, An Empirical Examination of Key Assumptions Underlying the Kohlberg Rationale for Moral Education (American Educational Research Association, April 1974, p. 11.

¹⁰Leming, p. 11.

¹¹Educational Testing Service, Moral Education: Development of a Model (Princeton: 1972), p. 21.

¹²Kohlberg, "American," p. 9.

It is possible, then, for a person to exhibit characteristics of moral reasoning from two adjacent stages. It is not like an apple lying between two baskets, but a sliding scale between two numbers.

For Kohlberg persons may also exhibit different stages of moral reasoning with different situations or different subjects. Generally, though, persons use the same reasoning for all moral dilemmas.

While no individual is totally at one stage, an individual with, for example, a postconventional orientation to doing stealing is likely to be at the same level on a civil disobedience dilemma.¹³

While there is commonality, there is divergence which is always within the parameters of the defining stages of moral development.

The Kohlberg stages: In 1969 in a series of lectures published by Harvard University, Kohlberg gave a definitive statement of the six stages of moral development. The stages are:

"Preconventional Level At this level the child is responsive to cultural roles and labels of good and bad, right or wrong, but interprets these either in terms of the physical or the hedonistic consequences of action or in terms of the physical power of those who enunciate the rules and labels.

"Stage 1 The punishment-and-obedience orientation. The physical consequences of action determine its goodness or badness regardless of the human meaning or value of these consequences. . . .

"Stage 2 The instrumental-relativist orientation. Right action consists of that which instrumentally satisfies one's own needs and occasionally the needs of others. Human relations are viewed in terms like those of the market place. Elements of fairness, of reciprocity, and of equal sharing

¹³ Lawrence Kohlberg and June L. Tapp, "Developing Senses of Law and Legal Justice," Journal of Social Issues, XXVII (November 2, 1971), 70.

are present, but they are always interpreted in a physical pragmatic way. Reciprocity is a matter of 'you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours,' not of loyalty, gratitude, or justice.

"Conventional Level This level, maintaining the expectations of the individual's family, group, or nation is perceived as valuable in its own right, regardless of immediate and obvious consequences. The attitude is not only one of loyalty to it, of actively maintaining, supporting, and justifying the order, but of identifying with the persons or group involved in it.

"Stage 3 The interpersonal concordance or 'good boy--nice girl' orientation. Good behavior is that which pleases or helps others and is approved by them. . . .

"Stage 4 The 'law and order' orientation. There is orientation toward authority, fixed rules, and the maintenance of the social order. Right behavior consists of doing one's duty, showing respect for authority, and maintaining the given social order for its own sake.

"Post-Conventional, Autonomous, or Principled Level
At this level, there is a clear effort to define moral values and principles that have validity and application apart from the authority of the groups or persons holding these principles and apart from the individual's own identification with these groups.

"Stage 5 The social-contract legalistic orientation. Generally with utilitarian overtones. Right action tends to be defined in terms of general individual rights, and standards which have been critically examined and agreed upon by the whole society. There is a clear awareness of the relativism of personal values and opinions and a corresponding emphasis upon procedural rules for reaching consensus. Aside from what is constitutionally and democratically agreed upon, the right is a matter of 'personal values' and 'opinion.' The result is an emphasis upon the legal point of view; but with an emphasis upon the possibility of changing law in terms of rational considerations of social utility Outside the legal realm, free agreement and contract is the binding element of obligation. This is the 'official' morality of the American government and institution.

"Stage 6 The universal-ethical-principle orientation. Right is defined by the decision of conscience in accord with self-chosen ethical principles appealing to logical comprehensiveness, universality, and consistency. These principles

are abstract and ethical (the Golden Rule, the Categorical Imperative); they are not concrete moral rules like the Ten Commandments. At heart, these are universal principles of justice, of the reciprocity and equality of human rights, and of respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons."¹⁴

Why are the stages described in a hierarchy? What makes one level higher than another? In Kohlberg's testing the stages are progressively more capable of resolving conflict. Stage 4 is "better" than Stage 3 because more questions and conflicts can be described, understood, and evaluated by the individual. There is no higher resolution of conflict than that represented by Stage 6. How is this conflict resolution, and therefore point of moral development for an individual, determined? A taped interview is conducted to determine the moral stage of an individual. A detailed scoring procedure is then applied to a transcription of the interview.

Persons are given ten questions, a series of hypothetical moral dilemmas. The dilemmas juxtapose traditional social roles and norms with specific situational demands. After the dilemma is read there is an inquiry period during which the rationale for the comments made by the person being interviewed are spelled out, drawn out, to identify the framework of reference in responding to and ordering the dilemma.

The questions are structural, not limited to the specific characteristics of one culture. Kohlberg contends they can be

¹⁴Lawrence Kohlberg, "Education for Justice: A Modern Statement of the Platonic View," in Moral Education: Five Lectures (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), pp. 630-2.

rewritten and reviewed for the culture which the interview is given.

One such dilemma used in conjunction with American groups is:

A man and wife had just migrated from the high mountains. They started to farm but there was no rain and no crops grew. No one had enough food. The wife got sick and finally she was close to dying from having no food. There was only one grocery store in the village, and the storekeeper charged a very high price for the food. The husband asked the storekeeper for some food for his wife, and said he would pay for it later. The storekeeper said, 'No, I won't give you any food unless you pay first.' The husband went to all the people in the village to ask for food but no one had food to spare. So he got desperate and broke into the store to steal food for his wife.¹⁵

The person being interviewed is then asked to respond and evaluate the story. The response given is the transcript which will be scored for placement in one of the six defined stages. The response to this dilemma is combined with responses to the other nine in creating the final score.

The scoring process was not finalized until 1972, and to date is unpublished. Kohlberg insists that persons who wish to apply the procedure must do so in conjunction with his institute. While this gives control over the use of the tool, it also diminishes evaluation by others.

James Leming has written the following concerning how persons relate to the stages and how the test results tend to verify the stages.

Studies on the comprehension and preference of the stages of moral reasoning have found that individuals comprehend all stages at or below their own stage and also one stage above. These studies have also found that when individuals are asked which stages of moral reasoning are the best they prefer the next higher stage over their own stage and lower stages.¹⁶

¹⁵Kohlberg and Tapp, p. 68.

¹⁶Leming, p. 3.

In the same context, Howard Lambert reflected upon the Illinois State Psychiatric Institute results, ". . . persons at any moral stage can understand all lower stages and will, on occasion, employ reasoning at lower stages depending upon their needs" ¹⁷ The implication is that there is a need to reorganize educational settings to bring about the greatest stimulation, to be the most impelling, and to bring together persons from adjacent stages of moral development. Growth in response to the interview questions would not be through "right answers," but through pressing together persons at next levels of growth. ¹⁸ The Kohlberg test results seem to show constant educational characteristics among all societies.

This pressing together of persons at next levels of growth suggests closer examination of the role of conflict in producing movement from one stage defined by Kohlberg to another:

This press causes conflict resolved by those beneath adopting the procedures above. Only by sensing the inadequacy and conflict of his own current stage of thought is the student impelled to reorganize at the next level. ¹⁹

This inadequacy was shown to students: "Our procedure was to throw these cliches (of proximate stages) in conflict, to pose situations where there was no ready answer, when there was violent disagreement." ²⁰

¹⁷ Howard Lambert, "Comparison of Cognitive Developmental Theories of Ego and Moral Development, Illinois State Psychiatric Institute, Chicago" (Washington: American Psychological Association, 1972), p. 10.

¹⁸ Kohlberg, "The Contribution," pp. 22-4.

¹⁹ Kohlberg, "The Contribution," p. 23.

²⁰ Kohlberg, "The Contribution," p. 23.

Once the stage of a person's moral development has been identified, Kohlberg uses group (peer, in Piaget's extended analogy) situations to illustrate the effectiveness of a higher stage in resolving conflicts which cannot be resolved using the logic of a lower stage.

This identifies, in part, the resulting education concept held by Kohlberg. Education is creating the environment for the "press" of adjacent and competitive stages of moral growth using problems which cannot be resolved on the lower adjacent level, but can be resolved on the higher level. Kohlberg makes it clear that there is no "indoctrination" involved, as opposed to the social theorist position. " . . . [teaching] stimulation of development is not indoctrination; rather, it is the facilitation of the child's development through a sequence that is a rational progression for him."²¹

Dysfunctional behavior. This is the basic Kohlberg concept of individual moral development. The description so far has dealt with functional, rational behavior. What happens when persons act "dysfunctionally"? Dysfunctional is used to mean choosing behavior characterized by none of the Kohlberg stages of moral growth. For example, a youth is walking home and decides to break a window in a housing project under construction--just to do it, with no reason to or not to break it. There is no consideration of moral rightness or wrongness. Dysfunctional does not mean a lower stage action viewed by a higher stage of moral development (such as Stage 1 action

²¹Kohlberg, "The Contribution," p. 23.

viewed by Stage 4), but a seemingly amoral action. In observing youth acting dysfunctionally, Kohlberg's conclusion was that this behavior was transitional and characteristic of adolescent youth.

Kohlberg includes in dysfunctional behavior moral relativism and nihilism, or destructiveness without principle: ". . . moral relativism and nihilism, no matter how extensive, seemed to be a transitional attitude in the movement from conventional to principled morality. . . ." ²² This means that nihilism may be a sign of an improvement in moral judgment. In Kohlberg's experience the nihilist can be understood as moving to an independently established and internalized moral base or framework.

Kohlberg posits a difference between moral action and stage of moral reasoning. By examining the dysfunctional or functional actions of an individual or group, the stage from which moral judgments are made cannot be inferred. Transitional quality of dysfunctional actions can only be assumed. For Kohlberg, behavioral characteristics of any nature do not affect the content and validity of the cognitive-developmental theory of moral development. Kohlberg wrote, "We are aware, of course, that moral judgment is not moral action. It is, however, a necessary if not sufficient condition for moral action." ²³ How does a person relate to the dysfunctional behavior of others? It is a question of one's reason nurturing the reflection of others and the underlying moral action to increasingly progressive levels, stages

²² Lawrence Kohlberg and Carol Gilligan, "The Adolescent as a Philosopher: The Discovery," Daedalus, CI (February 1971), 1075.

²³ Kohlberg, "The Contribution," p. 24.

and perspective. It is a hopeful approach to interaction with others, believing in and working toward moral improvement.

Individual characteristics in testing and observation. How do we as individuals relate to progression of moral judgment? When do we reach our "stage"? Can we regress? What number of the total population are morally mature in Kohlberg's schema? What is the real potential for moral development of a society?

In 1971 Kohlberg and Carol Gilligan collaborated on a major work in which they describe when a person reaches the final stage of moral development, beyond which they do not grow. After citing basic eras of human life, it was concluded that the same thought process spans approximately age 11 through adulthood. This does not mean that the 11-year old will utilize this capacity. It does mean that the reasons for moral judgment are basically the same for the 11-year old as for the adult.²⁴

This process suggests little growth for adults using Kohlberg's model. In his reflections on the stages of moral development, Kohlberg commented on one person's possible transition from Stage 4 to Stage 5: "John had not reached Stage 5 when last interviewed at age twenty-four. There is, however, hope; we have had some subjects move from Stage 4 to Stage 5 in their late twenties."²⁵ Kohlberg has

²⁴Kohlberg and Gilligan, p. 1063.

²⁵Lawrence Kohlberg, "Moral Development and the New Social Studies," paper presented at the meeting of National Council for the Social Studies in Boston, November 23, 1972, p. 14.

little hope for adult moral growth beyond this age. Two observations may be made. First is the stringence with which Kohlberg's model allows development to the higher stages. Second is the apparent low response of persons in their mid- to late twenties and beyond to subsequent growth in moral judgment. This creates a somewhat stagnant concept of adulthood and places a great deal of pressure for moral judgment education as part of society's commitment to pedagogy.

Recalling Lambert's statement concerning regression in moral judgment, it is possible for a person to use a lower stage of reasoning, particularly if there is felt need to do so. Kohlberg would state that this is an accurate reflection of the nature of moral judgment; that the model reflects reality rather than forming it. For Kohlberg the developmental task is not an easy one. To be effective, the task of enhancing moral growth must be waged between the ages of 11 and 28 if it is to be waged at all.

Concerning how well the task is being accomplished and how many persons attain to the higher levels of moral judgment, Edmund Sullivan (using Kohlberg's theory) wrote:

I would conjecture that relatively few people in our present culture attain a thoroughgoing post-conventional orientation [Stages 5 and 6] in moral matters But on the other hand, quite apart from the sheer extent of the task of acquiring such principles and thought patterns, we already have a chance to see a piece of post-conventional moral thinking laid before us in all its complexity. The necessary environmental stimulation is difficult to achieve. Even if there are people in our environment who take moral problems in a consistently post-conventional manner, we are seldom aware of all the considerations that they take into account since their deliberations extend over a period of time and in different contexts.²⁶

²⁶ Edmund Sullivan, A Developmental-Interactionist Perspective to Moral Values (Boston: American Montessori Society, June 1974), p. 33.

Again, the dilemma of Kohlberg's dilemmas is that beyond the test condition one cannot know what the lived stage of any person, in fact, is. The Kohlberg procedure has limitations in the understanding and facilitating of persons outside the test environment or test-controlled educational environment.

It is not known how many persons act on the higher levels of moral behavior; however, because of the stringent application of test results, it is probable that there are few. As Sullivan has pointed out, as an observer you would not be sure you were observing a person acting on a high level even if you saw one--assuming you were at Stage 6 yourself and knew what you were looking for in the first place.

James Leming paraphrased Kohlberg in describing his stages as "invariant development sequence."²⁷ Using Kohlberg's procedures, Robert L. Selman has noted; ". . . research indicates that movement from stage to stage is a long term process. Findings indicate that complete transition from one level to the next may take several years or more."²⁸ Our potential for growth is limited by our age, our environment, and our ability to sustain contact with adjacent, higher stages of moral development over a period of what may be up to several years.

²⁷ Leming, p. 2.

²⁸ Robert L. Selman, A Developmental Approach to Interpersonal and Moral Awareness in Young Children (Boston: American Montessori Society, June 1974), p. 21.

Despite the fact Kohlberg relies upon "sustained contact," it should be stressed that Kohlberg is concerned with moral development of the individual--not the individual as part of a group. While conflict and higher stages of reasoning are encountered in relationship, for Kohlberg the individual's reasons are the sole source of moral growth.

B. Morality Defined in Terms of Rationality

Moral "judgment" is "cognition" for Kohlberg. He has been quoted earlier as placing major emphasis not on feelings such as empathy and grief, but on reason as definitive of morality. The stress upon rationality is emphatic. For Kohlberg the highest level of post-conventional insight is "man as self-regulatory." Rational persons may vary from the law. The guideline for this divergence is: "Morality of rule: Justifying breaking when law is immoral or unjust, when law violates moral principles (e.g. fundamental individual rights)."²⁹ For Kohlberg the highest is the most rational and the ideal is to be self-regulatory, measuring interaction through one's rationality. At no point in his writing does Kohlberg limit the nature of rationality in defining moral judgment. Its only limit is enactment and interpretation by others.

A further indication of the role of reason is the structure of the interview process and scoring the moral development of an

²⁹ Kohlberg and Tapp, pp. 74-5.

individual. The tool for scoring the interview is called the Moral Judgment Scale. Two psychologists, William Kurtines and Esther Blank Grief, emphasize the factor of reason in scoring: "Scoring of the Moral Judgment Scale is based not on a subject's specific judgment to each moral dilemma, but rather on the reasoning he gives in support of his judgments."³⁰

No new information is gained here. It has already been established that the way in which a person responds to the ten questions is more important than the particular response. The use of the word "reason" has replaced earlier terms such as "framework"--rationality is necessary for morality.

Kohlberg terms his approach to bring about rationality a "new Socratic method." Kohlberg's method is, in part, the Piagetian formulation of authority-based and reason-based valuation:

It [the new Socratic] claims that, at heart, morality represents a set of rational principles of judgment and decision valid for every culture, the principles of human welfare and justice. The lists of rules and commandments drawn up by cultures and schools are more or less arbitrary, and hence their teaching tends to rely upon authority rather than reason. Moral principles, however, represent a rational organization of . . . moral experience.³¹

Kohlberg is speaking of bringing the natural and known information from the individual, as in childbirth. This is reflected in

³⁰William Kurtines and Esther Blank Grief, "The Development of Moral Thought: Review and Evaluation of Kohlberg's Thought" Psychological Bulletin, LXXXI:8 (August 1974), 453.

³¹Kohlberg, "A Cognitive-Developmental Approach," p. 14.

statements such as, ". . . social inquiry or analytic thinking cannot be taught, although its development can be stimulated and extended."³² For Kohlberg, reason is the natural gift to be brought forth from the person. Brought forth or not, it is the measure of the moral judgment.

B. Justice

Given the perspective of Kohlberg on stages of moral development and the primacy of reason, what is the nature of "justice"? Justice means different qualities on different levels or stages of human moral development. Reason implements justice. The level of reasoning determines the level of justice. Justice can mean reference to authority, preservation of contract for reciprocity, or the highest standard of adherence to a moral, principled imperative.

In all cultures if the stages of moral reason are the same, then the references for determining justice will be the same: "My [Kohlberg's] studies show not that the same basic moral concepts are used in every culture, but that the stages of their development are the same."³³ Expressions vary, but referants for justice are common to all.

The sense of justice is independent of culture. Kohlberg discovered this quality in study of children and their values.

³²Kohlberg, "Moral Development," p. 10.

³³Kohlberg, "The Contribution," p. 20.

". . . children often generate their own moral values and maintain them in the face of cultural training, and . . . these values have universal roots."³⁴ Here again is expression of the innate nature of moral judgment, values, and reason for Kohlberg which will emerge despite cultural transmission of particular or even contradictory values. Kohlberg does not attempt to describe why this occurs universally, only that it does.

The universality of justice necessitates the rejection in entirety of cultural relativism. Kohlberg is at his most passionate when refuting the claims of cultural relativism. For Kohlberg, the internalization of group standards not only does not define what occurs, but it is a dangerous concept.

We quoted the value-free and relativistic approach to moral research . . . as the internalization of the standards of the group; a definition which denotes nothing worthwhile. While in a democratic or just society moral internalization may culminate in just action, in a Nazi society it will culminate in genocide.³⁵

The ultimate result of cultural relativism is the absence of moral reasoning in society. Its focal point is the presence or absence of moral reasoning in public education: "Acceptance of the idea that all values are relative does, logically, lead to the conclusion that the teacher should not attempt to teach any particular moral values."³⁶ For Kohlberg this means to no longer attempt to juxtapose

³⁴Kohlberg, "The Contribution," p. 20.

³⁵Kohlberg, "The Contribution," p. 25.

³⁶Kohlberg, "The Contribution," p. 16.

views that have the potential for development of one or more individuals, but merely the juxtaposition of views for the sake of conflict itself. Clarification of values alone results only in value presentation, rather than committed and skilled working toward greater resolution of differences at a higher stage of moral development.

Value clarification is, essentially, in opposition to the philosophical perspective of Kohlberg, who explains the difference as:

Value clarification procedures have usually been based on the assumption that all values are relative. . . . While we agree . . . in stressing openness and avoidance of inculcation, we do not agree that all values are relative nor do we teach children value-relativity, which in its strong sense is an unsound doctrine. . . .³⁷

Kohlberg terms value clarification a "cop-out." He raises the rhetorical question, "How does it enable a teacher to handle cheating in the classroom?" The student may defend cheating as a result of the factors of his life as no less valid than the views of the teacher.³⁸ Value clarification does not assist in managing conflict. A hierarchy of stages does supply those standards as basis for justice when differences occur.

Justice, the primary factor in moral development for Kohlberg, is not alone, but in conjunction with three other orientations:

In stressing justice as the core of moral development, I need to note that justice or fairness (present in all stages

³⁷ Kohlberg, "Moral Development," p. 16.

³⁸ Kohlberg, "The Contribution," p. 15.

but in different ways) is only one of four decision-making orientations, each available at every stage. These orientations are rule-orientation, the pragmatic or utilitarian consequences orientation, the justice-orientation, and the conscience or ideal-self orientation.³⁹

And,

. . . we have also been able to define substages [of decision-making orientations] at each stage: an A stage oriented to rules and pragmatic consequences and a B stage oriented to fairness. While individuals sometimes skip a B substage, they must eventually end at a B or fairness substage whatever highest stage they attain.⁴⁰

This is a striking addition to the concept of justice and to the movement from stage to stage. The complete portrayal of moral development would include each of the stages and within each stage an A or B substage related to rules and fairness, respectively. The nature of movement is that persons always end at substage B in their final stage of development. Kohlberg has essentially established a twelve-stage theory.

A point of interest is the nature of justice at level six in relation to conscience. It is logically possible that what a Stage 5, substage B, perspective of a just act would be unjust (or at least unconscionable) at Stage 6. Kohlberg notes that justice is the motive or "core" factor in movement from one stage to the next. It would then follow that the reason persons need to reconcile conflict with the adjacent stage is awareness that a greater sense

³⁹ Kohlberg, "Moral Development," p. 15.

⁴⁰ Kohlberg, "Moral Development," p. 15.

of justice is needed. From substage B of each stage, a person is prepared rationally to reject previous concepts and move to a new understanding. For the person of highest morality, conscience is the highest moral worth in judgment. At this point it would be helpful to again give the definition of "conscience" in the context of Stage 6: "Right is defined by the decision of conscience in accord with self-chosen ethical principles appealing to logical comprehensiveness, universality, and consistency."⁴¹ "Conscience" is the internalization of self-chosen values at Stage 6. Acting out of conscience in this specialized sense actualizes a highest form of justice. The Stage 6 principles are universally and equitably applied to one's self and others. Stage 6 reason forms the most ethical judgments, which are internalized as conscience and consistently actualized in relationship with others as justice. For Kohlberg, reason, conscience, and justice are inseparable components of moral development at this highest level of moral growth. At lower levels of moral growth justice is the catalyst for change in reason.

D. The Church and Moral Education

In describing Kohlberg's concept of the nature and operation of moral judgment and moral education there has been no mention of the church. Kohlberg's view of the church and its role in moral education should be examined in the context of his basic principles--state his approach to moral education and consider what social group

⁴¹Kohlberg, "Education for Justice," p. 632.

might enhance this approach. Russell Marks reflects part of Kohlberg's view of moral education when writing:

. . . moral education is socially constructed and dialectically related to the social order. This means that moral education is not rooted in the nature of things or in God's will, but rather exists as both a product and creator of the social order.⁴²

For Kohlberg, moral education is not rooted in "God's will," but is in "the nature of things."

The central principle to the development of moral judgment and hence to our proposals for moral education, is that of justice. Justice, the primary regard for the value and equality of all human beings, and for reciprocity in human relations, is a basic and universal standard.⁴³

This basic and universal standard of moral education exists. The function of moral education is to bring this standard forth from the interaction of individuals. Kohlberg identifies the structure to facilitate this growth as the classroom. The instructor has the opportunity to control environment to the extent of bringing persons of proximate levels of moral growth into creative conflict over an extended period of time. . . What about the church in this process?

In his studies, Kohlberg concludes that the "religious education" of the church does not relate to "moral education."

Religion and religious education also do not appear to play any unique role in moral development. . . . In general our studies indicate that variations in religious affiliation and attendance are unrelated to moral development.⁴⁴

⁴²Russell Marks, "Moral Education and the Social Order" Viewpoints, LI:6 (November 1975), 31.

⁴³Kohlberg, "A Cognitive-Developmental Approach," p. 14.

⁴⁴Kohlberg, "A Cognitive-Developmental Approach," p. 16.

If not moral education, what then is the role of religion, of the church as an organized religious group? Kohlberg refers to "religion" in describing the legalism of Stage 4. It is at this point in moral growth that Kohlberg places the church:

Each stage is itself defined by values or issues that enter into moral decisions. One such issue is the value placed on life. . . . At Stage 4 life is valued in terms of social or religious law. Only at Stage 6 is each life seen as inherently worthwhile, aside from all other considerations.⁴⁵

Kohlberg limits the use of religion. Persons within the Christian community might want to identify Kohlberg's description of Stage 6 with our religion. Kohlberg does not.

Kohlberg does not refer to religion as universal. Religious qualities are cultural and limited. It is possible that organized religious groups may convey truths to assist in movement to higher levels, but Kohlberg's research indicates this is not the case.

⁴⁵Kohlberg, "A Cognitive-Developmental Approach," p. 15.

Chapter IV

CONTEMPORARY CRITIQUE OF KOHLBERG

Lawrence Kohlberg has come under increasing criticism for his theories due, in part, to his increasing impact on research and development of moral education programs. The criticisms build around the general themes of moral stage determination, moral testing procedure, and implications of the moral stages.

A. Moral Stage Determination

In 1974 James Leming published a major work in which he makes two distinctions as a basis for rejecting the moral stages found in cognitive-developmental theory. The first distinction is between "judgment mode" and "deliberative mode" of moral reasoning. The judgment mode is directed toward situations of others, and in retrospect structuring one's response. The deliberative mode is directed toward one's own situations prior to acting and determining to or not to enter the action.

In other words in the judgment mode of moral reasoning the individual is presented with a fiat accompli and is asked to evaluate the actions involved. In the deliberation mode of moral reasoning the individual is faced with an incomplete situation and his task is to choose the morally correct course of action for himself.¹

¹James Leming, An Empirical Examination of Key Assumptions Underlying the Kohlberg Rationale for Moral Education (American Educational Research Association, April 1974), pp. 3-4.

The second distinction Leming makes is between "classical" moral dilemmas and "practical" moral dilemmas. Classical moral dilemmas would be culturally perceived, but not be part of the life situation of an individual. An example would be Kohlberg's story of the mountain people trying to grow crops, to borrow food, and ultimately the husband stealing from the hard-hearted grocer. This would be part of the immediate experience of only a few persons. If it were part of a person's immediate experience, it would then be a "practical" moral dilemma.

Classical moral dilemmas will be taken to refer to situations which are removed from the life space of the individual and involve characters with which the subject has trouble identifying. Practical moral dilemmas will be taken to refer to situations within the life space of the individual and involving people and issues familiar to him.²

Leming objects that the cognitive-developmentalists do not take into account the different categories of questions which might comprise an interview.

. . . there are crucial assumptions which the cognitive-developmental approach to moral education . . . which are not warranted. Specifically this approach to moral education assumes that the individual's stage of moral reasoning will be stable and consistent regardless of the kinds of questions asked of him. . . .³

With this distinction made and the general objection to cognitive-developmentalism raised, Leming then relates the impact and nature of his research.

²Leming, p. 4.

³Leming, p. 3.

Leming's research attempted to demonstrate whether or not they were qualitative differences in the kinds of responses and meanings of responses among the four categories of questions--deliberative, judgmental, practical, and classical. Kohlberg's method was semi-structured interview: to taped responses, to transcribing the tape, to scoring the transcript, and to assignment of subjects to one of six stages of development. To test differences in the Kohlberg method and reality, Leming gave different practical moral dilemmas to 186 students in the 7th and 12th grades who chose situations with which they were familiar. From those situations a pilot set of six dilemmas were created, and three final practical moral dilemmas were selected from the pilot study.

The final three dilemmas dealt with a party denied to a girl, cheating on a school assignment, and peer group conflict. An interview schedule parallel to Kohlberg's was developed to score responses. Leming then gave interviews using Kohlberg's methodology, asking both the three pilot questions and Kohlberg's questions. Students were asked questions in both the judgmental and deliberative mode of moral reasoning.

The sample surveyed consisted of 60 public school students randomly selected from two middle schools and two high schools. There were 30 students in the 7th grade and 30 in the 12th grade. Scoring proceeded the same as Kohlberg's method. Items of concern were identified in responses and called "issues." The resulting scores of issues gave a Mean Moral Maturity Score (MMS) for each student.

The results of the study were: (1) 12th graders were higher in mean moral maturity. (2) Mean scores were higher in the judgment mode than in the deliberative mode. (3) Mean scores were lowest for deliberation on practical moral dilemmas. (4) There was no discernment of a naturally occurring invariant development of moral reasoning. In three of four categories there was growth from 7th to 12th graders. The one in which there was no difference was the category of practical deliberation--the critical one, with lowest scores.⁴ (5) Ability to resolve one's own actions are not increased with increased ability to philosophically conceptualize and define moral decisions for others.⁵ That is, improving classical ability to respond does not improve practical ability:

There exist serious questions as to whether stimulating moral reasoning will influence behavior, and hence serious questions concerning the value of stimulating cognitive development as a goal of moral education.⁶

This is a telling critique of Kohlberg's theory. It means that the ability to judge does not improve one's moral behavior. This may also be a telling critique of church procedure in sermon and education when cognitive thought only is stressed. It should also be noted that Leming's testing does not prove the opposite of his inquiry. It does not prove that ruling-out, or ignoring, cognitive development produces moral growth. While stimulating cognitive development may not be the only goal of moral development, neither is denying cognitive development.

⁴Leming, p. 15.

⁵Leming, p. 18.

⁶Leming, p. 20.

B. Moral Testing Procedure

In addition to questioning the discernment of moral stages, there is criticism of the procedure on other grounds. William Kurtines and Esther Blank Grief question whether or not it is male-oriented, and look at the complex, judgmental act of scoring the test.

It was noted that the main characters in each of the classical moral dilemmas were male and that this could influence moral judgments: "It is not surprising then that, as defined by Kohlberg's scale, females appear to be less morally mature than males."⁷ Kurtines and Grief are pointing to the same issue raised by Leming, but from a different vantage point. Classical judgmental dilemmas do not relate. The lower scores of women taking a test in which men are the main characters illustrates this point.

A further form of the variable of sex in the testing procedure which has not been taken into account is the sex of the interviewer:

. . . both the age and sex of the interviewer could influence a subject's responses (cf Masling, 1960). Children may respond differently to younger and older, or male and female interviewers.⁸

The structure of the questions and variable of the person interviewing raise questions with the procedure.

⁷William Kurtines and Esther Blank Grief, "The Development of Moral Thought: Review and Evaluation of Kohlberg's Thought" Psychological Bulletin, LXXI:8 (August 1974), 456.

⁸Kurtines and Grief, p. 456.

Kurtines and Grief also question the judgment involved in scoring. Who is to determine what is an "issue" from the tape recording and the weight it possesses? "The judgmental nature of the coding procedures introduces a potential for scorer bias."⁹ These authors note that, whatever the structural and environmental limitations of the test, the results supporting Kohlberg's theories are questionable because the test has not been uniformly administered:

. . . because administration of all . . . dilemmas is time consuming, few researchers use them all. In fact, in eight of the published studies covered in this review, the mean number of dilemmas administered was 6.1. Moreover, these researchers rarely reported which of the nine dilemmas they used. . . .¹⁰

The critique of Kohlberg's procedure by Kurtines and Grief points out that the concern to keep the classical questions inviolable by not publishing them is invalidated by the administration of only two-thirds of the questions (and different questions conceivably) in many of the tests comprising Kohlberg's data base.

C. The Kohlberg Stages

The first critique of the stages in application is that they are not helpful to students. Concerning youth educated toward Stage 6 moral truths, Michael Scriven has written:

⁹Kurtines and Grief, pp. 455-6.

¹⁰Kurtines and Grief, p. 456.

. . . [youth] may enthusiastically accept an abstract moral truth, e.g., freedom of speech or equality of rights, but they may have absolutely no capacity to relate it to specific decisions and situations in which it is involved.¹¹

Stage 6 may not help people do anything different, potentially, than if they were at a lower stage.

Scriven's concern for the real application in relation to students receiving moral education is presented by Robert Arnone and Gregory Rhodes from the perspective of the teacher. The new Socratic method Kohlberg suggests for incorporating moral education in the public school places incredible pressure on the teacher.

In order to be effective the educator must (1) have knowledge of the child's level of thought; (2) match the child's level by communicating at the level directly above; (3) focus on reasoning; and (4) help the child experience the type of conflict that leads to an awareness of the greater adequacy of the next stage.¹²

To add to the almost humorous comparison of this ideal type to a seventh grade classroom, the authors might have noted that this should be sustained for a period of several years for development to the subsequent stage. To be fair to Kohlberg, however, his response would be that the extent of difficulty in implementing the design does not invalidate the design--it only highlights the difficulty of moral education that has integrity. The strength of the

¹¹Michael Scriven, "Cognitive Moral Education," Phi Delta Kappan, LVI (June 1975), 693.

¹²Robert F. Arnone and Gregory Rhodes, "A Sociopolitical Critique of Moral Education" Viewpoints, LI:6 (November 1975), 57.

argument made by Arnove and Rhodes is that there is a disparity between the theory of moral judgment and the relationship to reality. Their concern is summarized by Gerald Regan who, after noting Kohlberg's influence on theory of moral education, notes:

One can, however, argue that there is a theory-practice gap: too often neither the theoretician nor the educational practitioner has paid enough attention to the other. Teachers often insist that too much of the theoretical writing ignores the pressing practical problems which must be taken into account in the classroom.¹³

Russell Marks raises questions concerning the relationship between "justice" or "reason" and the existing social order. In reading Marks' concepts, it is helpful to keep in mind Kohlberg's heritage of Piaget's social rules and peer values:

Built into these moral stages [of Kohlberg] however were important descriptive statements and assumptions about the nature of the social order. Foremost of these assumptions was that the existing social order was rational and just. Negatively stated, this meant that ideas that fundamentally negated the existing order were challenged by the Kohlberg model.¹⁴

Marks is close to overstating his case. Kohlberg's model allows, ultimately, for conscience of the individual above all else. Kohlberg's model also allows for validation of repression toward criticism of an existing social order using the concept of justice, and this is what Marks is really speaking to. It is, after all,

¹³Gerald Regan, "Moral Education in Theory and Practice," Moral Education, XIV:4 (October 1975), 222.

¹⁴Russell Marks, "Moral Education and the Social Order" Viewpoints, LI:6 (November 1975), 44-47.

adults who generally govern; adults who will not be put in an environment with a next higher stage and led to grow. By Kohlberg's statements, their age would mitigate against it in any event. If persons will not change, then they will revere justice as defined at their level of perception. This essentially provides an understandable, just repression by the hypothetical Stage 6 individual, or the Stage 1 and 2 individuals. The inability of the Kohlberg model to interpret any specific action is forcefully represented in a 1968 Dow Chemical sit-in. Kohlberg noted that he ". . . would take it that a Stage 6 sense of justice would have been rather unlikely to find the Dow Chemical sit-in virtuous. The rules being disobeyed by the protestors were not unjust" ¹⁵ This is Kohlberg's validation of Marks' criticism. The rules, in fact, seemed "just" to the person speaking while students protested. It may be that for the person in authority, whom the social order serves, the rules are almost always just. It can be construed as just to repress, with the highest moral intention and reasoning, those who would disrupt that order. Who was the more virtuous and rational, the professor lecturing or the students protesting?

Can any of the Stage 6 elements of highest moral reasoning answer this question? What about Stage 6 stress on "human dignity"? Which is more out of harmony with human dignity, to be or not to be involved with a demonstration confronting a corporation judged irresponsible?

¹⁵ Marks, p. 45.

Kohlberg has acknowledged that the stage theory cannot categorize individual actions. This lack of categorization, however, does not affect the validity of the structure. Yet Kohlberg did apply the principle of Stage 6 justice to a specific situation in which he was personally involved. The students in dialogue with Kohlberg did in fact use the same theory in opposition to Kohlberg. This is the heart of Marks' critique of Kohlberg--persons do use stages of moral development in interpretation of interaction with others, and Kohlberg's categories are not sufficient to the task.

Marks' final criticism of Kohlberg is related to the view of the existing social order. He quotes Kohlberg as having said, ". . . the majority of adults in American society are at a conventional level, Stage 3 and 4; leadership in our society . . . at the level of Stage 5 and 6."¹⁶ It is difficult for most persons to accept that the leadership of this country is cut in the mold of the philosopher-king. The assertion that leaders tend to be more rationally moral than the people they serve also reinforces the criticism that use of the Kohlberg stages would tend to validate the existing social order and repress the emergence of a Stage 6 conscience at variance with the present society.

¹⁶Marks, p. 46.

Chapter V

LIMITS AND LEARNING FROM KOHLBERG'S THEORY AND ITS CRITIQUE

Kohlberg's theory of moral development has broad implications for the church, even with the attendant criticisms. This section will deal with the transition from the theories of moral development toward a tool for enhancement of moral development. The transition will include the limits and conclusions reached by this study and will then state the learnings from Kohlberg's theory and the critique. This refined base of information will then serve as guideline and substance for the FAIRWITNESS tool.

A. Limits

For me the most striking criticism of Kohlberg's work was Leming's research. Negatively stated, his research refutes much of the procedure and test scoring of Kohlberg; positively stated, it is an affirmation of a practical, deliberative developmental approach to moral behavior.

One of the reasons the practical or deliberative limits Kohlberg's theory is that in practice (in church work for example), Kohlberg has not taken seriously enough the reality of habit. Habit may work against any cognitive rationalization of a moral truth.

. . . when facing practical moral dilemmas the individual may have built up habitual modes of response which include certain set actions and rationalizations. It may well be that these habitual actions and rationalizations are not sensitive to broader changes in cognitive maturity.¹

This is to say all the action is not in reason. The substance of developmentalism is not cognitive-developmentalism.

A further limit of Kohlberg's theory is the strict individualism it represents. People do not always make moral decisions alone. There are times when groups facilitate the decision-making process. To score persons by a test and claim that represents their moral judgment is to remove as a serious element in moral judgment the role of a support group. ". . . Dewey found that people are more likely to engage in helpful behavior when alone than in groups" ² Dewey's research indicated a disparity between individual and group behavior. Perhaps this work led Kohlberg to individual examination. What has not been researched by Kohlberg is individual behavior affected in relationship with others. That is decidedly distinct from "group behavior." This critique suggests that Kohlberg has developed an individual cognitive developmentalism. There are other options.

One option is found in the work of Piaget. His primary concern was peer influence upon decisions. Perhaps part of the dilemma

¹James Leming, An Empirical Examination of Key Assumptions Underlying the Kohlberg Rationale for Moral Education (American Education Research Association, April 1974), p. 16.

²Leming, p. 17

in Kohlberg's stage theory is that the individual is examined and tested apart from interaction with others. Piaget's emphasis upon peer interaction became social rules. These rules in turn became abstracted further into stages of individual growth. In this abstraction the original situation, context, of Piaget was lost.

When asked about whether his curriculum dealt with moral action as well as moral reasoning, Kohlberg said: "I told him we'd like to work on moral action but we had to understand that the core of moral action was a sense of justice."³ Somehow that core never surfaces. It is precisely a tool to bring about development--feedback (such as the test theoretically provides) and feedforward (such as the hierarchy of stages theoretically provides). The limit of Kohlberg's theory is not the concept of development; it is that there is no way to actualize that development save through a highly questionable structure for feedback and difficult-to-apply objectives for movement forward.

There is, finally, an irony in addressing the stages of moral development: however many stages and substages, the process is not definitive. If definitive, it cannot explain contradictory, perhaps irrational, behavior. Kohlberg, in an address to the American Psychological Association, said:

³Lawrence Kohlberg, "Moral Development and the New Social Studies," paper presented at the meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies, Boston, November 23, 1972, p. 17.

Suppose we assume that distinguishing between content and structure implies the independence of choice and reasoning. At the extreme this would mean that a Nazi might advocate genocide using Stage 6 principles or moral reasons. As we noted earlier, however, the distinction between content and structure is not absolute.⁴

Kohlberg ends this address noting the "bind" of not reconciling the divided "content" and "structure," necessitating use of an attitude-strength approach at times. Kurtines and Grief noted the irony:

. . . theoretically [for Kohlberg], individuals at different stages can exhibit the same behaviors using different types of reasoning, whereas individuals at the same stage can exhibit different behaviors using the same type of reasoning.⁵

If true, the authors pointedly comment, what difference do the stages make? They do not equip us to act nor do they define our action.

Is this a true limit? Does the stage theory result in little, if any, different action? Kohlberg directed a year-long project with five-year-old, lower income Negro children in a pre-school environment. He co-authored the final, extensive report of that project with his research director, Judith Jensen.

Each week [in the summer program] a meeting was held which was attended by teaching, research and administrative staff. Though these meetings often dealt with administrative matters, their primary focus was upon teaching

⁴Lawrence Kohlberg, "American Psychological Association Values Symposium Paper," U.S. Health, Education and Welfare Document ED 069 413, 1972, p. 14.

⁵William Kurtines and Esther Blank Grief, "The Development of Moral Thought: Review and Evaluation of Kohlberg's Thought" Psychological Bulletin, LXXXI:8 (August 1974), 459.

activities. An attempt was made to provide the teachers with the opportunity to exchange ideas and discuss problems, but this attempt was largely unsuccessful.⁶

This was the bringing together of practitioners and theorists which critics have called for. The result was largely unsuccessful.

The limits examined to this point deal with the effectiveness of the stages. How did the stages of cognitive reasoning come about and the final number come to be six rather than sixteen? A brief quote from Kohlberg's doctoral dissertation is interesting in appreciating the limits of the six-stage model: "The number of types we came out with was eventually rather arbitrary, and undoubtedly determined by the limits of variation of our particular population."⁷ Over the years Kohlberg has come to believe that in fact those six stages are the structure of reality in moral development. It should be questioned whether or not Kohlberg has established a self-fulfilling prophecy. He has a set of six stages defined, a test the scoring of which is based on the six stages, which in turn prove the universality of there being six stages.

If a rigid six-stage approach is rejected, what would this mean to moral developmentalism? Kurtines and Grief, who reject the

⁶ Lawrence Kohlberg and Judith Jensen, "Report of a Research and Demonstration Project for Culturally Disadvantaged Children in the Ancona Montessori School," Office of Economic Opportunity Grant, ILL-CAP-66-9255, 1966, p. 15.

⁷ Lawrence Kohlberg, "Moral Thinking: The Development of Modes of Choice in the Years Ten to Sixteen" (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Chicago, 1958), p. 89.

six stages approach, comment: "The absence of support for a six-stage model does not imply there are no trends in moral development. It simply indicates that Kohlberg's six specific stages may not be useful."⁸ That is precisely the conclusion. The six stages are not a necessary component of developmentalism. The principle of developmentalism, as opposed to behaviorism and social theory, is not affected by the dismissal of a six-stage formula for development.

B. Learning

Kohlberg's theory is attractive to the Christian church if for no other reason than he does hold out the option for real moral growth. Within Kohlberg's perspective, persons can change and do change. In fact, moral change is, in part, definitive of the meaning of humanity. Within this context "developmentalism" reflects the interest and commitment of the church to facilitate moral growth.

After applying Kohlberg's theory it is apparent that moral growth, while natural, is not easy. Particularly, the fully ethical pattern of response to life is a goal to be nurtured if achieved. Assisting moral growth may be accompanied by frustration and failure as well as by satisfaction. In this way Kohlberg's theory is verified and makes intelligible the real struggle on the part of the organized church to bring about moral growth of individuals and groups.

Leming's work is more helpful in defining the particular nature of the moral development dilemma--the dilemma that increasing

⁸Kurtines and Grief, p. 467.

the ability of individuals to judge does not increase their ability to act or to reflect morally upon themselves. Practical, deliberative moral development is more complex and difficult than moral judgment. Abstraction is not necessarily related to the final meaning of moral judgment--action in a person's relationship with others and within himself. The judgment of Kohlberg is not action, but toward action as a consequence of reason. Leming's research suggests this consequence does not readily occur.

Who is to determine where and how another person has grown morally? What standards are significant to look for and what evaluative weight should be ascribed? Who is to determine what the goals will be? Much of the criticism of Kohlberg has focused upon these points. Kohlberg has defined the way in which a person should consider judgments. He has defined stages which seem to be arbitrary, and content of stages which seem to be equally arbitrary. The importance is not the rejection of Kohlberg's particular positing of norms, but recognition that the error may be in the imposition of absolute norms. It is not a question of better definition or better set of stages; it is a question of the arbitrary process.

An alternative form of developmentalism could be termed "interactive." Interactive developmentalism establishes the criteria for what is of moral worth for the person or persons being served. Rather than tell someone, "These are the categories which will define your moral judgment," the observer would provide a series of alternatives and ask the person to select and prioritize standards or qualities of moral growth. The person is involved in the

development of the tool for examining his practical, deliberative moral decisions. When an observer evaluates the deliberation of the individual or individuals, it is in terms of the framework specified--in terms of the standards which are felt to be, at least philosophically, important.

The stress here is, in part, upon the congruence of a person's professed norms and enacted norms. Does a person's actions reflect what he wishes to happen? If so, does that produce a sense of moral satisfaction? "Moral satisfaction" is used here in the same sense as resolution of conflict in Kohlberg's writing.

This is an interactive developmentalism response to the example of genocide. While Kohlberg's theory cannot explain the Stage 6-styled advocacy of defining one group of persons as not being human (and therefore not subject to the qualities of "human dignity"), the interactive response would be to observe the congruence of perceived moral norms and behavior, illustrate the tension in conflicting rational frameworks, and relate the alternative perception of others. The conflict is not resolved by a higher rationality, but in interaction with others. It is interpersonal, not cognitive, developmentalism.

The focus of change is upon the individual as the individual relates with others. It is not subjective arbitrariness. It is a commonly established subjective value. It is perception in common, or at least commitment to working toward perception in common.

Moral deliberation is interactive. It does not assume moral absolutes or presume their assumption by the individual. It brings the value of the individual forward from the present context of decisions.

This is considerably different from an effort to predefine goals for the individual and in some way manipulate environments to bring persons of immediately adjacent stages into creative conflict. What can occur is working with persons using their terms (manipulation to bring about personal choice of growth) and the terms of those with whom the persons interact (mirroring and clarifying to bring about personal choice of growth). Interaction as the tool for facilitating moral growth assumes that the tool for evaluation is applied in real life context rather than removed laboratory situations. This is to go further than Leming in his rejection of Kohlberg's theories. It is to distinguish not only between classical and practical but classical, practical and situational. The process of evaluation being described is, for example, evaluation of behavior of an individual in a group in which the person actually lives, acts and chooses on the basis of moral judgment.

In this context, if a person chooses to act-out an alternative means of judging a situation, it results in more than rational reconstruction. It is embodied in one's actions. There is unity of theory and action that is of importance in the wholistic tradition of the Judeo-Christian doctrine. The dilemma encountered of the disparity between action and reason rests in the process Kohlberg

follows. Evaluating initially by abstracting reason from action (whether practical or classical), the results are equally abstracted. The process of cognitive-developmentalism produces the dichotomy.

A process which evaluates interactively in the life context of an individual, involves rational construction and reconstruction of action in which the person is vitally involved. There is no division in process; there is no division in result. The individual still makes the choice and acts, but in relationship. At this point the question would be keenly felt how interactive, situational developmentalism could possibly be brought about. This is the content of the next section of the project. The only way in which developmentalism can avoid the same criticisms which undermine Kohlberg's work is to move from the laboratory into the real world--from arbitrary stages to interaction and resolution of conflict as individuals relate to the world around them.

The sufficient social group to implement cognitive developmentalism as defined by Kohlberg may well be, as he suggests, the public school. It would also seem that the natural social group to provide a trusting community working toward a common moral development, interactive developmentalism, is the church.

It has been noted that a strength of Kohlberg's model is that it gives some standard not only by which moral growth can be measured, but toward which individuals can aspire. Moving to an interactive developmentalism, allowing individuals to prioritize, does not eliminate the impact of such goals. It redefines the

nature of the goals in the same way the goals function in moral judgment. Recall the unsatisfactory way in which moral judgment or worth was determined in the Dow Chemical sit-in. The same words of the Stage 6 person were used to come up with precisely opposite moral interpretations of the event. The reasoning which led to one or another position about the sit-in was attributed to differing levels of moral judgment. Which view was "highest" varied upon the person judging, not the stages. Rather than despairing of any resolution, interactive developmentalism would bring the persons into contact with one another--with no assumption that either Kohlberg or his students were of a higher moral stage or of proximate moral stages. The goal no longer is the students' attaining to Kohlberg's higher view, or of Kohlberg's attaining to the students' higher view, but toward all participants working together toward a common understanding. The Kohlberg goal is a hierarchy of moral absolutes. The interactive developmentalism goal is continuing common subjectivity in moral growth. It is conceivable that a group would establish among themselves standards and understanding of basic moral principles. It would not be helpful to then impose those principles upon all other groups. The interactive developmental response would be to begin again with subjectivity, open to change, challenge and growth with each group. Part of the honest expression of that subjectivity would be a clear statement of the important moral understanding one had previously reached with the other group. Part of the consubjective expression would be working with the present group toward ever more clear cognitive and relational expressions of one's moral

understanding. Cognitive developmentalism applies justice above other, interactive developmentalism.

It is the nature of terms describing moral behavior, and the immediate goals of moral behavior, to change in context of living situations. At one moment it may be appropriate for a group participant to listen, at another to speak, at another to challenge as the group moves and grows together. That group may be a family, work associates, or church committees. There is a present moment growing from a past history. The function of interactive developmentalism is to establish and reestablish the goal of common moral development as that history of relationships continues.

The nature of moral decisions as historical is important. The nature of the moral event taking place, and the reasoning behind it, relates to a history of interactions. The thought process is not defined in logical terms abstracted from the others with whom one relates, but is derived from the past and present circumstances. It further means that observer comments, and certainly those in a laboratory setting, could not presume to address or evaluate as objective the moral position of another. It is a subjective interpretation of the moral judgment which can then be compared with the subjective interpretations of the participants in working toward a common view of what has occurred.

This again illustrates the importance of the observer using criteria determined by the participants and not predetermined criteria. The goals are goals recognized by the individual and are goals which may, and likely will be, changed over time as interpretation occurs.

In this way the reconsideration of goals is more reflective of their real function in life--more as theories to be tested than facts to be followed.

In this reformulation of goals in moral judgment, the change occurs in the contextual perception of the individual. If the individual feels that the subjective interpretation of the observer embraces and completes his own perspectives, he may be willing to attempt change. This is parallel to Kohlberg's understanding of conflict resolution leading to higher conceptualization. Then, if subsequent experience reveals this attempted change of behavior to be successful and beneficial (again through the subjective views of the individual, the persons with whom the individual interacts, and the observer), the individual may well internalize that change.

Evaluation must be change-initiating and change-reinforcing. In cognitive-developmentalism it is through observations and controlled environment based upon those observations. In interactive developmentalism it is through observation, shared subjective perceptions, and enactment of alternative behavior resulting from working toward common perception.

Interactive developmentalism is descriptive of what happens when persons change. Persons try to receive evaluation from others which they feel is effective. They want to test out that evaluation. The challenge of interactive developmentalism is to develop ways of bringing about more effective consubjective sharing of moral deliberation.

People respond, listen and change as they are informed about practical moral dilemmas. The challenge is to create trust for receiving or rejecting information for testing and evaluating alternative actions. The role of others is deliberative and reflective, rather than conforming. To move toward the group as producing conformity, closing options in common subjectivity rather than opening options, would be the opposite error that Kohlberg makes. While Kohlberg would error in developing rational structures without action; conformance would error in action without rational struggle, growth or choice. Between rationalism and conformance is an intentional involvement in sharing subjective perspectives, such as challenging one another.

The suggested approach to developmentalism assumes moral development without positing the boundaries of moral stages. Stage projection results in the presence of structures without the comprehensive function of describing moral behavior and result in the paradoxes apparent in the Kohlberg critique.

If not stages, what? Enacted standards are the way in which people behave as well as their reasons for behaving as they do. Alternative actions are the hope for reformation of standards and changing of behavior. This is why, if change is to be enhanced, standards must be shared and evaluated in the context in which they occur.

It is not surprising that Kohlberg found little, if any, moral development in the life of adults. It is quite possible that classical moral dilemmas are responded to in roughly the same way

by an adult. It is doubtful that Kohlberg could measure and then control an environment of adults to come into contact with conflicting opinions at proximate stages. It is imposing a structure which most adults would likely not accept. Working with adults in their life context would seem to be beyond the bounds of the kind of findings Kohlberg uses to establish his premise of adult moral stagnancy.

Interactive developmentalism suggests that group influence is as important for adults as it is for youth. An assumption of Kohlberg's is that adults do not change moral stages. The Saul/Raul motif for adult life-changing commitment is a critical element of church belief. This is conversion, not a process of strictly rational reformation. There is no potential for conversion, radical transformation of values and perspective in Kohlberg's writing, only protracted sequential growth. Kohlberg's theory is questioned by the experience of the local church. Adults are seen as assuming new life and perspective. After this radical transformation and commitment, persons of all ages seem to seek ways to implement more fully their discovered principles of living. What is needed is a way of answering that need more readily and more comprehensively in a person's life.

Another aspect of moral development characteristic of adult and youth work in the church is that a person being observed and evaluated should have an opportunity to challenge the perceptions of the evaluator. One way to achieve this is to have observations open to critique by participants. The moral judgment of the observer

is as open to question and as accessible as the moral deliberation of the person being observed.

A quality which makes Kohlberg's procedures questionable is a postulation of objectivity and knowledge and the subsequent removal of the process from evaluation by those who take part. Kohlberg assumes persons will tolerate, or ought to tolerate, someone else measuring their responses to moral judgments using a scale of which they are not aware and with which they may not agree. Yet they are to accept the verdict of what their stage of moral development is determined to be. A falseness is involved--a falseness that the observer knows what is truth and his observations (taped, transcribed, scaled) are representations of that truth. In the critique of Kohlberg it was demonstrated that there are a variety of factors which weigh against such an assumption. Rather than attempting in some way to determine the impact of these data-bending variables, an alternative is to accept the subjective nature of evaluation and make it open to the person being observed. A person should have an opportunity to say: "Just what were the specific things that caused you to assume my response meant that?" "Could you not have interpreted it in this way, the way I intended it?" These questions indicate the person has an opportunity to challenge the perception of the observer as well as the observation process.

Openness of the process and information to those involved is a part of what is suggested by interactive developmentalism. This assumes that if persons can challenge assumptions they will take criticism more seriously and better understand why the observer

believes alternative action is called for. When it is understood why the observer feels there is an area for needed growth, the person can act in a way to bring about that change.

The basis for moral judgment is not only rationality, it is enactment or pragmatic experimentation. Persons can act their way to a better understanding in the same way they can think their way to a better action. We need to do more than help people think about alternative actions in moral dilemmas. We need to provide experiences with moral dilemmas, allow different ways of response, and provide response in turn. People want to "try on" different moral decisions to see how they "fit." In enactment, significant moral insights are learned.

Interactive developmentalism suggests a further amendment to what has been learned, in a negative sense, from Kohlberg's theories: in life-context the views of others with whom persons interact may be more important (accurate, helpful, acted upon) than the views of an observer. The evaluative process should be the shared experience of all involved--all attempting to value experience and actions in such a way as to be more moral.

This is a theoretical understanding found applicable in the Christian church. Remaining to be answered is how this can be brought about. How can one interactively, in life context, deal individually and collectively with the nature of moral judgments? This, when merged with experimentation in emerging technology, led to FAIRWITNESS. The theoretical implications of cognitive developmentalism are not limited to this particular procedure. This

procedure does not encompass all of the demands of the theory.

FAIRWITNESS is appropriate to some situations, but not to others.

However, FAIRWITNESS does demonstrate that one tool in response to this approach to developmentalism can enhance moral development.

Chapter VI

A TOOL FOR MORAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

A. Implications of the Theoretical Development

Within the theoretical guidelines established in the first five chapters were clear implications for a specific church endeavor. Some of these implications should be stated as introductory to the tool developed.

The implication of emphasizing the practical development of moral insight, for the church, would mean that the question of the morality of its participants would necessarily be raised in situations with which individuals face daily. This would potentially include the encounters in the church as well as in family and work environments. The church concept of moral development would be concerned with the whole person and his practical moral judgments.

What about moral development in the deliberative sense? Beyond presenting for moral reflection situations with which individuals are familiar, the tool for moral enhancement would of necessity be vitally involved with persons as they make moral judgments. This would occur in such a way that individuals would choose to have the tool present. Moral development of the adult in the context of the church removes the developmental flow from

the laboratory and places it in personal encounters throughout the church and throughout the life of the individual.

What about the importance of the peer influence on individuals? Whatever process is established, it should take into account that moral judgments are contextual and interpersonal. In evaluation of the nature of a person's behavior, at some point the individual and the persons with whom his decisions are made need to evaluate the same information as the observer. Noting the possibility of observer prejudice, rather than presume objectivity, skilled subjective perspective is assumed. The church must invite challenge and correction of observation.

The developmental process of the church respects the individual. Kohlberg's system impacts the individual if there is feedback about moral stage results. The impact is in summary only and a person may be informed as to the stage he is found to be in. The church must allow its process to be open and clear to all participants and accessible for critique. The observer may then have greater impact because an opportunity has been afforded to understand why the observer has made the evaluation presented. The evaluation and enabling must be immediate to the event observed.

Another way of reaching the same implication of immediate evaluation is the nature of practical, deliberative moral judgments. If one is concerned with the development of such moral judgments, the response must be close in time to the moral event itself. If a person has finished a moral event in the past, it is easy to objectify

oneself and relate to moral discernment in retrospect just as one would to a person in a removed situation. Post-practical moral evaluation is "safe" in that a person may rationally abstract himself from the moral imperatives. Immediate practical evaluation is sensitive because the person is still involved with the decision, persons, and environment of the decision. This illustrates the tension with Kohlberg's rationalism. In response to practical moral judgment, rationality may become a defense. Reason and emotion together are authentic involvement of the individual in a moral judgment. Objectively, it may be said that giving immediate response and evaluation to an individual at the time, or close to the time, of moral decision may create the opposite problem: strict emotional effusion with little impact on the thought process of the individual. This is an important question to raise with whatever instrument is designed and implemented for immediate response to practical moral judgment.

This is the meaning of interactive developmentalism for the church which was used as a guideline for the present project. As the tool for group observation and feedback was being refined, the theoretical understanding was being formed. Merging of the theory and the initial tool brought about the new procedure called FAIR-WITNESS--videotape feedback to groups.

B. Lake Oswego United Methodist Church Setting

In 1972 the Lake Oswego United Methodist Church pioneered a systematic videotape technique for facilitating group interaction.

At that time, John Giancola, through the Alternative Media Center in New York, was the only other person to have written and applied work in this field. Giancola's work was more artistic than systematic and involved no attempt at coding behavior; nor did it attempt to create a systematic relationship among persons involved in sessions at which there would be videotape response.

In the Lake Oswego experiment, first needed was to determine whether or not a group meeting or an ordinary business session could be videotaped unobtrusively. Second, determine whether or not selective segments of the tape could be replayed to the group immediately following the meeting. Third, whether or not lay persons could be trained sufficiently in group process analysis and videotape to select the segments to illustrate areas of group strength and weakness as well as to make verbal commentary to share their interpretation with the group. A final determination was whether or not individuals and groups would respond affirmatively and creatively.

A training session was established for small groups of lay persons to become skilled in group process and videotape. The training period covered 52 contact hours, plus assignments, over a six-month period. Since inception in 1972, this course has been repeated six times, the last and upcoming classes being taught by lay persons. There has been no problem in recruitment for this comparatively arduous educational experience; in fact, there is a waiting list for persons who wish to be trained.

After completing the training, individuals serve groups in the church. A series of three taping sessions are established for

groups ranging from the Council on Ministries to the Finance Committee. In each instance the group served must invite the videotape process team to the group by unanimous vote. Once invited, the observers tape a regular meeting after which segments are shown, for thirty minutes to an hour, for commentary and dialogue. The commentary enters upon the interpersonal relationships and the task achievement of the group.

The Lake Oswego experiment has had broad impact. A private foundation published (in 1974) the training text of the church's videotape group process workbook. This text now generates sufficient revenues to underwrite the maintenance and upkeep of the church's videotape equipment. It is the only published text in this field.

The church has served many outside groups: business offices, school administrative units, school teachers, day care center staffs, ministerial associations, and federal employee training projects. During 1975-76, Lake Oswego church received a public high school teacher on sabbatical to learn our system and work with us. It was the first time that such a sabbatical, with pay, had been granted under supervision to other than an academic institution.

The videotape group process experiment: (1) established that the local church could use a contemporary technological tool in a unique way for the enhancement of individuals--and do it better than any other sector of society; (2) allowed lay persons to observe and comment upon the values of the interaction observed in real life situations within and outside the church; and (3) allowed individuals and groups served with this tool to see themselves as others see

them and, on occasion, to alter patterns of behavior by their own choice. In short, the experiment enabled individual action in changing behavior.

Conversely, with videotape group process equipment: (1) We had no way of showing the relationship of each event upon all other events in a group meeting. Kohlberg's process, despite its faults, is able to take into account all events of a decision or series of decisions. Videotape feedback was a selective process and, in being selective, the relationship of events was unclear. We were able to show that a particular action was uncaring as seen from the eyes of another person, but we could not show that the uncaring action resulted in a subsequent behavior or subsequent change in group dynamic. We could be specific, but could not embrace the impact of that specific event upon the meeting. (2) We could not effectively appeal to the rational structure of the individual and people in the meeting. The persons could see themselves in action and, even in the high learning stages of the videotape process, the learning was emotional rather than rational reconstruction. This is fine and necessary; however, it is short of what would be desirable--that of being able to rationally structure the emotional experience of evaluation and response. (3) The power of observation was retained in the hands of the observer. The observer was the only person to know what had been omitted and recorded on videotape. The observer controlled what segments should be seen and in what sequences. For this reason there was a sense of authority dilemma for the group being served.

One of the advantages of videotape feedback is that it allows a common reality contact for the observer and the group. The person being observed can see what the observer saw in making his judgment and can then either agree or disagree with the observation. This largely overcomes the traditional barrier between observer and observed. The observed may well ask, "How much do I really trust the judgment and insight of the person observing me?" While videotape helps to overcome this tension, it still left areas of knowledge from the persons being observed. How could the persons being observed get an efficient overview of what the observer saw? How could they interactively assess the same information and make a radical departure from the observer-observed tension?

The Lake Oswego church already had a relatively sophisticated first step in an interactive developmental tool for moral judgment which we didn't fully appreciate. The theoretical guideline for the instigation of videotape was to revitalize groups within and without the church. Time and again over the four-year period leading to this project, the videotape observations arrived at various values and ethical qualities of human relationships.

Realization that the process of group behavior was in essence moral judgments on the part of all individuals in the group came about over this period of time. It became increasingly difficult for example to separate classical "tasks," such as gatekeeping and standard setting, from the values of interpersonal relationships, such as listening, caring, and reinforcement. Working one morning with a group of teachers at Adams High School in Portland, this

merging of process and moral judgment, or moral behavior, became clear. I had commented that I felt the teachers needed to be more punctual in attending the meetings because of the waste it created and the tension it caused the group leader. One teacher replied that tardiness was necessary. He said the teachers really cared about one another, but that tardiness was one of their patterns that had to be divorced from that respect and concern. I replied that I could speak more eloquently about my concern for you by my attentiveness to what you value in the group, than by merely the words, "I love you." After speaking, it struck me that by addressing persons in their life situations, we had entered into more than rational progression of group dynamics. We had entered into the living out of the values and faith of the participants. To speak of changing behavior in the interpersonal context, and the task context, is to speak of basic and, in some cases, reformation of values--to see oneself and the relationships one has in a different way, and to act differently.

We had developed a unique tool for evaluation concerned with moral judgment. Yet, it rested, finally, with the values of the observer projected through the observation and the integrity of the observer in having the group accept those values. Too little of the process dealt with goals of the group itself, particularly in the goals of their relationships. Therefore, it had serious limitations. However, because it is the best tool available, it is generating increasingly broader audience and use.

In addition to experimentation with videotape, the Lake Oswego Church developed interests in other forms of technology. Microfiche storage of information became one way in which the church gained a substantial library of videotape research at low cost. Connecting with national clearinghouses for information, current research in videotape was catalogued and used to balance the work done locally.

Videotape and microfiche were technological tools designed to problem-solve in the local church. Videotape was initiated to problem-solve stagnant, meaningless group encounters. Microfiche was initiated to bring current research at low cost to the church programs.

C. Emergence of a Technological Form: Micro-Computer

At the same time the church was developing a sensitivity to technology, a radical change was occurring in the state of the art of a different tool: the computer. It was a change which would not only alter business interest in this tool, but would free the tool for the local functions as well. It would be helpful to briefly state the history of computer growth and the dream I developed as to how the computer and videotape might become an effective interactive developmental tool, and then share how this dream became a reality.

It appears anomalous to write of moral judgment and computers in the same context. Few modern innovations or inventions stir emotions as quickly and thoroughly as the computer. Computers are

identified with "automation" and "super-brain" and "will machine control man or man the machine?" Certainly no technological tool has occasioned so many cartoons and jokes. Throughout the 1960's to the present, cartoonists present the scientist overwhelmed by the horrendous spectre of the errors on a computer level, or the ignorance of personality of the computer. The humor reflects an awe and uneasiness about the reality and potential of this tool. The computer has sensitized us to the power of our tools, because it has permeated and affected almost every dimension of interaction in our society.

Kingsley Widmer has written a concise statement of the conventional view of computer output and its values:

. . . technical manuals and computer print-outs, both proliferating and crucial modes of communication neither come forth as authoritarian diktats nor as witty and humane statements. And there's the rub on feeling and intelligence. Subject neither to taste nor form, much of our technocommunications must lack most moral and aesthetic possibilities. And when turned to more responsive purposes, they must still lack most moral and aesthetic qualities.¹

Widmer's analysis is that these primary forms of contemporary communication are devoid of moral quality or inference--both stripping us of aesthetic sensitivities and challenging us to creative uses of the information gleaned from the bowels of the computer. Beyond giving us more information, the computer is seen as a giant of insensitivity.

¹Kingsley Widmer, "Sensivility Under Technocracy: Reflections on the Culture of Processed Communications," Arts in Society, IX:2 (Summer-Fall 1972), 221.

In the several years since this reflection, the state of the art of computer technology has undergone radical changes, changes which clearly have already integrated computer technology further into real, descriptive life style, catapulting us far beyond the cartoonists' vision. These recent changes combined with the history of computer technology, have the potential for a different quality than Widmer described--a quality of enhancing human interaction and sensitivities. The cartoon image of the wall-sized behemoth computer with a maze of dials and flashing lights will continue for some time until the public comes to understand that what a decade ago required such architecture and size now is reproduced in a fashion so small as to be facilely held in one's hand. Part of the awesomeness of technological change is that fashionable concepts which persons are just getting around to reading are largely irrelevant. Dan Bowers reflected on the changes in the computer world:

The time is 1962, an eon ago. The IBM 1401 and the NCR 315 with 6 microsecond cycle time, 16k of memory maximum, programming in Autocoder, and a price tag in the beyond \$150k reign supreme for business data processing Everyone had once met a programmer, but no one really knew one. The days of wooden computers and iron men!²

Bowers goes on to describe the emergence of the minicomputer and the subsequent reduction of size and changes in computer use. Then he noted the warning given in Modern Data magazine in 1973 about the coming of the microcomputer: the "computer-on-a-chip." He

²Dan Bowers, "Comes der Revolution--Again," Modern Data, VIII:1 (January 1975), 36.

noted that the disregard for this technological change had begun to show the signs of destruction for corporations, and he also noted the emergence of new and vigorous computer companies, tools, and technologies.

Perhaps some of today's leaders in microsystems are so because they heeded our warning eighteen months ago. The rush of events in the eighteen months have brought the computer industry to the brink of another period of traumatic upset, and the world of January, 1977, will look entirely different from the world as it exists today.³

This is the background for an intriguing examination into the emerging technology and its potential uses with the church for moral development. What are the "rush of events" of which Bowers wrote? What are the momentous changes since 1962 and again since 1972? The technological changes should be held in balance with Herbert Simon's incisive statement about the development of computers in our time and our place:

'But after all,' the questioner always says, 'how can a computer be insightful or creative? It can only do what you program it to do.' This statement--that computers can do only what they are programmed to do--is intuitively obvious, indubitably true, and supports none of the implications that are commonly drawn from it.⁴

What is the difference between the past and the present state of the computer art that alters the significance of the computer? First, we will explore the meaning of the minicomputer.

³Bowers, p. 36.

⁴Herbert Simon, The Shape of Automation for Men and Management (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), pp. 80-81.

Minicomputers are so named because of their size, not their ability to perform tasks. Andre Vacroux wrote authoritatively about the advent of minicomputers when he noted in a recent Scientific American: "It is now about fifteen years since the electronics industry learned to make miniature electronic circuits on a 'chip' of silicon by alternating processes of masked etching and diffusion."⁵ In 1963 and again in 1965, the Digital Equipment Corporation introduced two computers using this chip storage of information and circuitry. Because they were the approximate size of a two-drawer legal file cabinet, the computer became known as a "minicomputer."⁶

A minicomputer is first of all a computer and then a computer with particular characteristics. Being a true computer and not an accounting machine, desk-top calculator, or the like, it is powerful enough to support a full family of peripheral services such as disks, tapes, and high-speed printers. Initially, minicomputers were designed to be used in laboratory and industrial environments. Whether alone or in partnership with another computer, the mini is capable of withstanding severe environments.⁷

What was once a wall became a desk top or file drawer, depending upon the hardware manufacturer's design. Jon David,

⁵ Andre Vacroux, "Microcomputers," Scientific American, CCXXXII (May 1975), 32.

⁶ Vacroux, p. 32.

⁷ Charles Testa and Sheldon Laube, "Making the Mini Move," InfoSystems, XXII (January 1975), 40.

president of Systems RDI Corporation, wrote about the cost impact of the minicomputer:

. . . minis, initially in the \$50,000 price area, were coming down in price year after year to \$30,000, \$10,000 and even \$5,000; a business system would often require disk (\$50,000), tape (\$35,000), and printers (\$35,000) in various combinations, making total system price way beyond that of all but the largest of businesses.⁸

What this amounted to was that hardware producers did not want to eliminate the market for large-scale computers, so in many instances they raised the system cost of the minicomputer to the approximate level of the maxi. Thus the computer was still out of the price range of the nonprofit organization, except one with unusual resources or one of national scope. It was microtechnology supported by high competition in the business field and the space program that created the mini and the next step in computer design.

A computer consists of some basic components: an input and output system; a CPU or processor, which contains the control, arithmetic and logic unit (ALU); and the memory. In the maxicomputer, the various components are physically in separate structures. In the minicomputer, the control and ALU are together, and the memory is reduced in size. To begin to understand the microcomputer, one must begin with the microprocessor.

A microprocessor results from putting the ALU and the control functions into one integrated circuit chip.⁹ The microprocess fetches

⁸ Jon David, "Role of the Minicomputer," Data Management, XIII (February 1975), 17.

⁹ Jerry Ogdin, "Microprocessors: The Inevitable Technology," Modern Data, VIII:1 (January 1975), 42.

the control instructions stored in the memory and then decodes, interprets, and implements them. The microprocessor manages the temporary storage and retrieval of data and regulates the exchange of information with the operator through input and output functions.¹⁰

If a computer has a microprocess, it is still not a microcomputer. To be classified as a microcomputer, all five of the major computer subsystems noted must exist on one small set of packages, either a printed circuit or in integrated circuits.¹¹ What does this mean? Picture in your mind the initial wall-sized computer characterized by the cartoons. Now picture the desk or file drawer sized computer of the early 1970's. Now picture a single plastic card 9 3/4 inches by 5 3/4 inches. The latter is a complete microcomputer.

Vacroux wrote:

Other typical microcomputer applications are desk-top calculators, compact business machines, bank terminals, check processors, payroll systems, process controllers and chemical analyzers. Over the next few years microcomputers should penetrate strongly into such areas as communications (with smart terminals), biological and medical research (with better monitoring and diagnostic instruments) and education (with more practical and economical teaching machines).¹²

Vacroux was wrong. By September of the same year in which he wrote this, not only had a smart terminal (able to originate and alter memory) been developed, it was commercially marketed by IBM. Vacroux noted that the larger memory of the microcomputer was 16k bits, the ordinary one being 8k.¹³ Vacroux vastly underestimated the capacity;

¹⁰Vacroux, p. 35.

¹¹Ogden, p. 42.

¹²Vacroux, p. 32.

¹³Vacroux, p. 35.

the present computer of this style has 64k. To put that in perspective, the first maxicomputers competed for larger and larger memories, one of the larger ones being Control Data which boasted a memory of 45k.

The IBM 5100 was the first commercially available complete microcomputer. In total, it is almost exactly the size and weight of a 3/4-inch videocassette tape recorder. The computer, with all computer facilities, maximum memory, carrying case, printer, tape, telecommunications connections to link with other computers by telephone, costs but \$26,000. Microcomputers are therefore within the economic range of nonprofit organizations such as churches, which may have access to local foundations willing to fund computer applications for church and community.

The concept of what a computer is and can do has been altered by technological change. Now a computer can be carried into a room. Through telephone lines, a smart terminal can connect to a program in a computer across the nation. A computer is now no more frightening in size than a typewriter with a small television attached. Persons therefore relate to the hardware differently. Because of the change in costs and portability, one can begin asking for other applications of computers rather than for business and information storage alone. For the first time, ethical examination of computer uses can be initiated. This may not necessarily occur, but the potential is present.

This was the history of computer development occurring parallel to the refinement of the group process work and the delineation

of a need for an interactive developmental tool. In the fall of 1975, I began conceptualizing what a computer could do in relationship to the interactive work which had been initiated with adults in group settings.

D. A Tentative Developmental Procedure

What could a computer do in enhancing moral development? It would have to adhere to the practical, deliberative, interactive guidelines established; that is, it would have to be with people, serving people, accessible to people, and desired by those people rather than forced upon them. With this broad area of concern, the computer has unique potential. The computer can generate a "television picture." Just as the videotape can replay a group's scenes over a television, so a computer could, hypothetically, generate graphically all of the observer's comments and all of the reactions of the group as well. The same television set could show particular scenes from the videotape and a "profile" of the observer's impressions of the group.

If a computer could be acquired, the observer could enter each observation made of the group into the computer as the group met. Immediately after the group session, the computer could compile and graphically display the observations entered. The computer could graph other information entered previously, perhaps the result of some standard or goal of the group. From the comparison and contrast of the computer-generated graph onto a television or cathode ray tube (CRT), questions would arise from the group about specific

observations. The computer should be programmed in such a way as to store observations keyed to the digital counter on a videotape deck, so the computer could identify at what point on the videotape any specific scene could be found. If an observer witnessed the group using unhelpful humor, that could be entered on the keyboard and then shown in context with all other observations of the individual after the meeting had ended. Should the group or the observer wish to see the videotape of that scene, the computer could identify at what point on the videotape the scene could be found. The digital counter on a 3/4-inch videocassette is very accurate, so the scene could be easily located and replayed. This is essentially the format of the present group process application of videotape. Only the observer makes written notes on the position of the scene on the tape and the information has no way of being identified by the participants unless the observer chooses.

It was apparent that in a group meeting any time persons come into contact, that contact has a "profile"--it has a face, texture and quality. The problem with observation and participation is that it is almost impossible to get an impression of what the full face of the experience was. It is possible with videotape to see isolated segments of an experience, but not the experience as a whole. If persons could only see the contour and flow of a meeting from one event to another as the observer witnessed it, from that perspective they might rationally understand the dynamics of a meeting, the choices which they made individually and collectively, and they might choose to alter their decisions. It was

hoped that a computer could show that profile. Moreover, I believed a computer could be used to compare that observed profile with the preconceptions of a group.

A group might by consensus agree on what the "ordinary" or "ideal" meeting would be. What happened first, second, and throughout the meeting to the conclusion? How much time would be allocated to each of the characteristics of the group? What dysfunctional as well as functional behavior would occur? The group could also see their own impression of what their group was or, depending upon the interest of the group, should be about. That standard, or ideal, could then be compared with observations of real meetings. In the overlap, the individuals could see how the observations matched their preconceptions. Areas of needed challenge and growth would become apparent. With this potential tool, the area of needed growth would not be understood by the observer alone, but by the observer and the participants interactively.

Of course, it was not known whether or not this could be done, nor how to go about making it happen if it could be done. Retaining a basic commitment to playing out the theoretical implications of the concept, encouragement to attempt this came from the idea that this would be a way around what has been called "dumb" learning. Dumb learning is doing something right, that produces good effect and relationships, without knowing why it went right. As a consequence, although one can be glad for the good experience and for the good decisions, it is not always apparent what decision

was effective. An example occurred at a small seminary in the Midwest one year at Christmas when there was a particularly harsh storm. All persons had to remain on campus rather than return home. To make the best of the bad situation, they had a potluck dinner on Christmas day, singing hymns and enjoying one another. Everyone felt good about the event and decided to recapture the good feeling by continuing to have potluck dinners. The feeling was never recaptured, and within six months the potlucks were cancelled entirely. Closeness of fellowship during adversity had produced the good feelings, not the putluck. This is characteristic of much of the way we evaluate our interaction with others. When a meeting goes well, we try at various levels of intention to repeat that which went well. We do this subconsciously, if not consciously, in an attempt to repeat effective, meaningful encounter. In examining group sensitivity to the decision-making process which comprises human encounter, how often do persons unsuccessfully attempt to duplicate their good experiences of the past?

A profile generated on a cathode ray tube could help. Over a series of meetings, the observations could be compared with a group's ideal, the direction the group wishes to be moving. Over three sessions, the group could attempt to conform individual and group behavior to that norm--gatekeeping, consensus-taking rather than voting, taking time to raise ethical and religious questions with the subject matter at hand (no matter how uncomfortable this would initially feel, the groups in the church may feel conceptually this is how they would like to be free to respond if appropriate).

Do the graphs with evaluations and suggestions of how to improve behavior by the group's standards show greater congruence of observed behavior and group norms? If there is greater congruence, does it pay off to group members in personal meaning? In task effectiveness? In depth of direction and involvement? Rather than being just another meeting, does the experience become a vital encounter of faith, values and ethics in one's life in a way that is not consuming but renewing? If so, the group perhaps has learned, changed and grown in moral decision making relative to the persons and group. Perhaps there are insights which will carry over to other groups since the computer has stressed the conceptual construction of the group and, hopefully, avoided dumb learning. If the group has not been renewed or if there is negative feeling about the result, then the group has the highly significant option of discussing whether or not its ideal is reflective of meaning in life. A cynical financial group may outline its norm as the most cold, unfeeling process imaginable. As they get closer to this ideal, what do they learn about their assumptions? What components do they have to include to be fully alive and to enhance finances at the same time? Central to a group's learning in relation to the hypothetical computer projection is the examination of actual behavior by established criteria in which basic understanding of life and relationships are explored in relation to what would ordinarily be termed "mundane."

There is a theological assumption here of moral deliberation in operation--that an individual is in trust with God in each event.

To establish the moral development of the adult or any person in the church, the task is not to create special groups whose definition is to become more morally attuned; it is rather to work with existing groups in and outside the church to draw forth the moral assumptions of daily life with the persons with whom one lives.

The concept of a projected profile of observed behavior highlights another assumption that there may well be patterns to the decision-making process of a group. In the four years of observing group behavior with videotape it was observed that, while groups vary greatly in their profile, groups also tend to establish a pattern of decision making and relationships which may be more or less helpful to meaningful involvement of all participants. A series of computer observation of a group, even if the group did not change their behavior, may illustrate that uninvolvement by one member resulted habitually in diffusion of the group from the topic at hand. This characteristic led to another kind of behavior, and so forth. We are talking about more than avoiding dumb learning, getting to the initial uninvolvement as the key to avoiding diffusion in the group. We are talking about illustrating the life of the group and raising the question of whether or not this is the life that participants desire to live or, from habit and mutual expectation, do live.

The computer was potentially the tool to achieve this purpose because of its ability to graph information and its speed of operation. Immediate response to decision making brings forcefully home the moral qualities of decisions. Still, in context, persons may

choose, more significantly, to grow. The computer can enter information, order it, and present it with speed unintelligible to human thought process. Even with a relatively slower microcomputer, the time from end of entry to graphic display of information would not be more than two or three minutes. Telecommunication link to a major computer with faster speed of execution could allow the turnaround time to be five or ten seconds. This would be for all entries for an hour-long encounter or meeting, assuming one entry every 15 seconds, noting behavior, person, and either digital or real time.

If the computer could give a graphic portrayal of the meeting and its profile, why use videotape as well? Videotape would be the reality check for the computer-entered observations analogous to the observer in Kohlberg's system running off copies of the test and scoring procedure and showing it to the person tested. It would open up the observer's assumptions to the participant and would place the observer and participant on equal footing. Through the computer graph, the participant would have a visual impression of all observations and when they occurred. Through the computer any of the observations could be checked. This is more than an immediate check upon the observer, it would hypothetically allow the observer and participants to alter the data on the graph or change the graph as they came to a different view of the events. The Piaget/Kohlberg method of scoring could be facilitated using video rather than audio tape. The main emphasis, however, is upon immediate, open accessible scoring and observation, not upon subsequent refinements whether by group or observer.

E. Constructing FAIRWITNESS

The original dream described would be a way of enlivening the developmentalism of Kohlberg and incorporate its critique. It would allow application in the church. To make the dream a reality, first needed was to find persons skilled in computer programming and knowledgeable about whether or not similar work existed and, if not, whether it could be created. David Mesirow, a teacher on sabbatical to work with the group process application of videotape at the Lake Oswego United Methodist Church, recommended two programmers living in the area named Peter and Trudy Johnson-Lenz. Upon contacting them and explaining the idea of using the computer for humanizing purposes, they became excited about the idea and offered to help. Peter Johnson-Lenz is a nationally known programmer who has worked at the Institute of Behavioral Science in Colorado and as Chief Systems Analyst with Tryon-Bailey Associates in Boulder, Colorado. Since becoming an independent computer program consultant with his wife, Trudy, he has worked designing such programs as a comprehensive sickness inventory profile for the Department of Health Services at the University of Washington, income tax survey programs for the State of Colorado Legislative Counsel, and design for media referendum for the City of Eugene, Oregon. Trudy Johnson-Lenz writes the procedure for use of the programs Peter creates.

Peter Johnson-Lenz wrote a complex, highly sophisticated computer program to accomplish FAIRWITNESS. He worked many hours testing and revising the concept. The tests were run on grant time

and money from the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry in Portland, Oregon. Space was made available during the developmental stage at no cost.

The program had to allow for change with each group served. There had to be a preparation mode of the program which could identify each different group by name and participants. The first element of preparation mode would necessarily be the raters or observers of the group. For one group there might be two or three observers depending upon the series of observations. Each potential observer's comments would need to be kept discreet from other observer comments.

A second element of preparation mode would be who comprises the group. To code behavior or an event in which all took part, the "group" is essentially a member of the group as a whole. In addition, the name of each person in the group would be entered in order that observations could be examined for either the group as a whole or for any individual member of the group. For example, it might be felt that a specific person needed more direct feedback on his interaction, but not in the context of the group. The additional graph of the observed behavior could then be shown and discussed at a later time. This has occurred since inception of the project and has proved to be valuable.

A third element of the preparation mode would be what events are to be observed. This can be a limitless list. Words describing behavior of all kinds were initially established, and a list was compiled of basic behavior essential to observation and given to

Peter Johnson-Lenz. The words used in the pre-tests and the first actual group application (with the consent of the group) were introduction, clarifying, information seeking, opinion giving, setting standards, gatekeeping, decision-making/closure, domination, diffusion, and uninvolvement. The word "gatekeeping" refers to allowing all persons to speak to an issue and inviting those who are silent or quiet to take part. All other descriptors are self-explanatory. In working with a group, the list of words, or descriptors, would almost invariably differ from this initial list used. For example, the word "humor" was not included for the initial model.

The final element of the preparation mode would be sequence or the number of decisions or meetings observed. It must include the group's standard or ideal and each session or decision for which there is to be an observation.

Peter Johnson-Lenz designed the events to be observed, the indicators, to include the commands "Start," "Stop," and "Extend." The start event indicates the beginning of the sequence to be observed. The stop event indicates the end of the observation entries and is the signal to the computer to stop expecting more ratings. The extend-event means that any time a special command "E" is given in relationship to an observer's entries, the computer will fill in the space with the same event. That is, if the group is observed as information-seeking at digital counter number 118 and the computer has been told to extend the observation, the computer will continue to enter information-seeking until the next command is entered. This is to represent that many events in group

experience are not isolated moments, but are a progression of a particular kind of interaction (such as information seeking) over a period of time. The extend (E) command allows this to be reflected.

Actual observation of a group is simple once the preparation mode has been completed. Once the computer has been placed in mode IN to accept ratings, the statement "David rates Session 1" is entered and the computer is ready to accept all entries, coded by participant, behavior, and digital counter number. As the entries are made, the computer screen notes each entry for the observer. As an example, the screen would look something like this:

DAVID STANDARD

GR, START, 1
J, INTRO, 1
P, CLARIF, 11
JO, INFO, 21
GR, OP, 41

GR represents group, J and P the first initials of participants' names; JO would represent a Joan if J represented Jan. In entry mode, the computer will accept abbreviations of all entries and, in display of the entries, will spell out the names and events for the participants to make clear the meaning of the graph. When finished with the entries for a sequence, the STOP entry is used. The computer may then be placed in mode OUT and display of the information just entered shown to the group.

The final element of the program is mode OUT--showing graphs reflecting observations of the person's behavior. A RATINGS command shows what sequences are observed and by whom. By giving a LIST

command with the name of the rater and the sequence, all of the entries for a sequence, such as exemplified above, are generated.

The mode OUT element must be prepared in advance of a group observation. This does not mean the information is organized in advance, only that the structures within which the information will be organized by the computer must be indicated in advance.

When the computer projects a graph, symbols must be used. A line of a graph is composed of individual symbols strung together. Therefore, each anticipated line of ratings (David for Session 1) must be given a symbol. The command LINE, then the symbol (such as 1) is given; then the rater, the participant, and the sequence. There can be a separate line for each person, if desired, as well as for the group as a whole. It has proven helpful to use the symbol G to designate the groups' standard, and 1, 2, and 3 for each session by an observer. If possible, the first letter of each participant's name should indicate his individual line. Other options would be to use symbols such as periods, commas, lines, or bars for the elements of the graphs. The preferred symbols make the graphs more readable.

A second preparation for the output mode of the program is ORDER. In what sequence should the observations be graphed? Peter Johnson-Lenz designed the profile graph so there would be a base line horizontally. All events above the base line would be considered essentially positive (although not necessarily--depending upon sequence in the meeting) and those beneath the base line essentially negative. The indicators to be observed would be listed from top to bottom on the left side of the graph. The base line

would be composed of fifty dots, each representing two percent of the total time for the decision. The base line would always be filled 100 percent, whether the meeting took fifteen minutes or three hours. When executing the ORDER command, the way in which the indicators should be arranged are listed. For example:

```

ORDER
DECI
GATE
SET
OP
INF
CLAR
INT
BASE
DOMI
DIF
UNIN
END

```

This would order the originally specified test elements to be graphed.

When graphing, the resulting framework would look like this:

```

DECISION/CLOSURE
GATEKEEPING
SETTING STANDARDS
OPINION GIVING
INFORM SEEKING
CLARIFYING
INTRODUCTION
----- .....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!
DOMINATION
DIFFUSION
UNINVOLVEMENT

```

Note that the mark "!" represents every ten percent of the elapsed time of the meeting. This is to enhance the readability of the graph. A graph of line G of the group's ideal would potentially look something like this:


```

      GRAPH G
DECISION/CLOSURE :                               GGGGG
GATEKEEPING      :                               GGGGGGGGGG
SETTING STANDARDS :                               GGGGG
OPINION GIVING   :                               GGGGGGGGGG
INFORMATION SEEKING:       GGGGGGGGGG
CLARIFYING       :       GGGGG
INTRODUCTION     : GGGGG
.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!
DOMINATION       :
DIFFUSION        :
UNINVOLVEMENT    :

```

This would show, for example, what a hypothetical group would desire as the profile of its meeting, by elapsed time and kind of interaction desirable. This information would be established by a pre-test and consensus of the group and would be entered prior to the group meeting. At the time of the group meeting, the only information which would be entered would be the observations for the meeting itself. The observations for the meeting would then be graphed with the ideal. This might look like this:

```

      GRAPH G1*
DECISION/CLOSURE :                               GG***
GATEKEEPING      :                               GGGGGGGGGG11
SETTING STANDARDS :                               GGGGG
OPINION GIVING   :                               *****GGGGG 111111111111
INFORMATION SEEKING:       GGGGGGGGGG 111111
CLARIFYING       :       GGGGG 111111
INTRODUCTION     : *****G
.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!
DOMINATION       :       111
DIFFUSION        :
UNINVOLVEMENT    :       111111

```

The G represents the group ideal. The 1 represents an observer's conceptualization of the first session. An * represents the points at which the group ideal and the observer's entries were the same. If the ideal and the observed behavior were identical, there would be all asterisks on the graph.

In reading the example graph to a group, the observer could illustrate the sequence of domination and its impact not only on the uninvolvement of the group, but on the general tone and tendency to opinion-give more than information-seek. The group might then challenge whether or not that domination took place. On command, the computer would note a number (such as 39) indicating at what point on the videotape such entry was observed and made.

In addition to the profile graph, it was deemed necessary to have at least one other way of displaying the observations. Peter Johnson-Lenz suggested a percentage graph and, as a result, the program can execute either the profile or bar graph. The bar graph of the above example would look like this:

```

      GRAPH /G1
DECISION/CLOSURE : GGGGG          111
GATEKEEPING      : GGGGGGGGGG     11
SETTING STANDARDS : GGGGG
OPINION GIVING   : GGGGGGGGGG     1111111111111111
INFORMATION SEEKING: GGGGGGGGGG     1111111
CLARIFYING       : GGGGG          1111111
INTRODUCTION     : GGGGG          1111
.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!
DOMINATION       :                111
DIFFUSION        :
UNINVOLVEMENT    :                111111

```

The bar graph shows the same information arranged in such a way as to call attention to the basic time commitment of the group. The base line still serves as an indicator of two percent units. A group seeing the above graph would likely respond that too much time was spent giving opinions about the subject. The computer might then call up several points on the videotape that observed this behavior.

The group could either ask for some point in the meeting of interest to them or ask the observer to select one he felt to be indicative of the problem.

This is the essential FAIRWITNESS program. Written in the mathematical language APL, it represented an important contribution to the use of computers. The next question was to be who would use the program. Both David Mesirow and I learned to use the computer terminal and the appropriate language commands. Trained videotape persons from Lake Oswego Church volunteered to provide the videotape camera work necessary to use the procedure.

International Business Machines Corporation then made a major contribution to the testing of FAIRWITNESS. They provided free use of their microcomputer (IBM 5100) for the testing phase of the program. They also provided a computer tape on which to store the program. The 5100 has the capacity to operate television systems as well as show the program operator what information is being entered through a CRT mounted on the front panel. Through this fine cooperation, the portability of the system was precisely what was needed to test the procedure for it is entirely self-contained, needing only to be plugged into a conventional wall outlet.

F. FAIRWITNESS Methodology

In order to establish a methodology to test the FAIRWITNESS program, institutions which had present or past interest in computers and groups were notified of the research being developed. The primary institutions notified were the Institute of Behavioral

Science, University of Colorado; the Computer Services Department of Harvard University; and the M.I.T. Corporation, which had established a computer-aided-instruction (CAI) system in a number of universities. From these contacts and further research, some conclusions were reached about the state of the art of computers and groups and the relation of FAIRWITNESS to that art.

One parallel application of computer technology in groups today is in the area of diagnostic and prognostic decision making. Howard Raiffa is an author and researcher in this field. His approach is analytic. He is concerned, as are major corporate structures, with decisions about which the outcome cannot be definitely predicted. What is the best choice among uncertainties? The analytical model of decision making in uncertainties involved first listing of variable options open for gathering information, for experimentation, and for action; second, listing the events that may possibly occur; third, arranging in chronological order the information acquired and the choices made as time goes by (including moral perspectives); fourth, deciding how well the consequences that result from the various courses of actions are liked; and fifth, judging what the chances are that any particular uncertain event will occur.¹⁴ This is called the "prescriptive theory of analysis." Each possible outcome of a decision is weighted by its expected monetary value (EMV). The

¹⁴Howard Raiffa, Decision Analysis: Introductory Lectures on Choices under Uncertainty (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1970), pp. ix-x.

EMV is probability of occurrence times value of loss added to probability times value of gain.¹⁵ In this way concerned groups of business executives can project the best course of action and act accordingly. They have taken the least risk at highest value; the computer has helped them determine this complex decision. In business terminology, this is the "critical path" method of decision making. It is being able to evaluate at each point in the history of a corporate decision and being able to test a path, retrace, and go to another path if necessary.¹⁶ This analytical approach to problem solving is a major use of computers in business.

The analytical approach can be differentiated from the "simulation" approach. Simulation models are computer programs designed to produce reports based upon data representing typical input received by the real world. The simulation method is sometimes called a "black box." One person has written about the difference between simulation and analytical uses of computers in group problem solving:

Simulation models can be differentiated from analytical models. Analytical models, or mathematical, require the model builder to write mathematical equations depicting exactly how the inputs to the model are to be transformed into outputs. Analytical models require at least two assumptions: (1) that these mathematical equations can be determined, and (2) that the equations adequately represent the transformation process. Simulation models, on the other hand, do not require these assumptions.¹⁷

¹⁵ Raiffa, p. 9.

¹⁶ Raiffa, p. 150.

¹⁷ Mark Bomball and others, "Understanding Simulation," Data Management, XIII (February 1975), 30.

In this way the simulation model is not restricted to mathematical equating of value structures. It does require careful observation of real world interaction in such a way as to demonstrate high probability of one action resulting in a different conclusion. Both analytical and simulation may use the numerical technique of probability. Simulation is interaction among group members and assumptions may change through that interaction.

There is a third current use of computers and group work which is strictly experimental to date. It is close to the FAIR-WITNESS in concept. Research is being conducted on group decision-making use of computers in which the computer is not used to predict, but to describe. Rather than have persons manufacture weights in a given hypothesis, weights are derived from behavior and then used to clarify and inform--termed "judgment policy capturing."

In exercising his judgment, each of these people [in a group] must utilize a number of items of information, each of which has uncertain validity, and each of which is entangled in some way with every other item. An underlying judgment 'policy' governs the way each participant integrates the various items of information into a simple judgment.¹⁸

The Institute found that the best, and perhaps only, way of obtaining accurate description of judgment policy was through an empirical view of actual judgments. Unfortunately, the researchers, Thomas Steward and Linda Gelberd, go on to apply the information

¹⁸ Thomas Steward and Linda Gelberd, "Capturing Judgment Policies," University of Colorado Institute of Behavioral Science, Report 151, September 1972, p. 1.

learned to predictive uses. Once the judgment has been captured, one can predict future behavior of oneself and others.¹⁹ However, the work has been highly valuable. It has shown that weighting is curvilinear, not a linear function. Values are a complex relationship in which positive reaction is a mid-range response, with negative feelings above and below subjective, interactive points.²⁰

Equally unfortunate as relating to predictive speculation is that the application of this research has been simulation, never actual encounter. The closest direct application of the concept of judgment policy capturing is found in "An Alternative Approach to Labor-Management Negotiations," which recounts an attempt to have a real strike negotiation conducted through computer assistance and feedback of judgment policies. The offer was rejected, and the only proximate endeavor was to have the same negotiating teams agree to a simulation after the contract had been agreed upon. Through this experience, the researchers reached several conclusions: "In complex decision-making human judgment is found to be (a) covert, (b) inaccurately described, and (c) inconsistent."²¹ In the simulation, prepared for the Dow Chemical Company, the researchers sought to determine: (1) the accuracy of negotiators' understanding of

¹⁹ Steward and Gelberd, pp. 1-2.

²⁰ Steward and Gelberd, p. 8.

²¹ Walter Morley Blake, Kenneth R. Hammond and G. Dale Meyer, "An Alternative Approach to Labor-Management Negotiations," University of Colorado Institute of Behavioral Science, Report 145, 1972, pp. 2-3.

their and others' judgments; (2) the nature and amount of real conflict between negotiators; (3) whether or not applications of judgment theory and computer graphics would result in greater agreement than that obtained by the usual verbal exchange; and (4) the feasibility of this approach in actual negotiations.²² Although limitations of the application resulted in limited conclusions about items (2), (3) and (4), the computer appeared to be able to identify more accurately real, enacted values.

The weakness of these areas of research is the point of intention to prescribe behavior by predicting behavior or outcome. The strength of simulation and judgment policy capturing is seemingly almost a by-product, being a reality check for one's self-perceptions of values and behavior with observable and codifiable (and therefore capable of being illustrated) behavior.

FAIRWITNESS is unique as a computer process. It is designed for use in real encounters, not simulations or projected decision making. This pioneering endeavor, combining videotape and computer observation, has proven helpful.

The second phase of the development of FAIRWITNESS was to test it. Part of this phase was simply getting used to IBM's version of APL--there are many variations of computer programming language. The program also needed to be "de-bugged," or to run as many conceivable mistakes, errors, and possibilities to see what the result

²²Blake and others, p. 3.

would be. While the program may take into account all of the positive possibilities, it must also take into account possible errors.

Previously taped group sessions were used to test the program. Placing the computer in front of a television screen, the videotapes of group meetings were replayed. As tapes were played, information was entered just as though a real meeting were being taped; in this way the entry process, graphing, and accuracy of computer recall of individual segments of tape could be checked. After the program was basically de-bugged and the program operation familiar, the procedure was ready to be used with an actual group.

What kind of group is FAIRWITNESS designed to serve, and what was looked for in the initial application? There are practical size and time parameters for the system which limit not the computer/video instrument per se, but the FAIRWITNESS procedure specifically to certain groups. Just as videotape group process is limited to groups of less than twenty, it is true of FAIRWITNESS as well. A desirable group for the computer/videotape process would be between nine and fourteen (we have worked with as few as five persons). A group of over twenty could conceivably be undertaken with more than one observer; however, that would tend to confuse the integrity of one subjective observation from outside used in relation to the impressions of participants. The program is designed for more than one person to enter information, simultaneously using more than one terminal.

There is essentially no task parameter to the application of the process. Whether a group conceives itself as essentially

fellowship or essentially task, there would be a role for the FAIR-WITNESS observation. The only limitation in the self-concept of the process is that the group should be ongoing, not assembled for the purpose of experiencing FAIRWITNESS.

There is a time demand and a time parameter. There must be a pre-session to explain the process, allow each person to accept the idea, and time to conduct a pre-test to determine variables to be observed in group behavior. The explanation could take ten minutes, the consensus another ten. The working through of group dynamics, the concept of the profile of the group, and reaching consensus on what the groups' standard or ideal would be is a longer process. It would be possible to accomplish this in test form, scoring and compiling each separately, but this would lose some of the interactive value of the group working through the values which brought them together. The estimated time for drawing this information from a group, assuming there are other agenda items, would be one hour. Less time allocation would run a serious risk of invalidating the results in the mind of the participants.

There is also a demand for time subsequent to each of three successive meetings. If group meetings are weekly, for three successive weeks the computer/video feedback takes place. If daily or monthly, the succession of three feedback formats is constant. The feedback time should not be less than thirty minutes, and it is recommended that a full hour be allowed so the groups' questions and other observations can be brought forward completely.

With these demands, the time parameters for groups that could be served with FAIRWITNESS is somewhat marked. The video-cassettes run 60 minutes, and often two 60-minute tapes are used. More time than this could be easily handled by the computer, but is unwieldy for the videotape component. Therefore a group must comprehend that its agenda may be limited by the additional feedback time.

With this orientation for group service, the first group chosen to experience FAIRWITNESS was a subschool of Adams Senior High School in Portland, Oregon, called the Alpha School, and the experience was so named. The Alpha group was chosen as the first implementation of the process for several reasons. First, the size and time parameters were clearly defined. Second, the group consisted of eight persons including the chairperson. Third, there was a fixed agenda and adherence to a time schedule (the meeting time was fixed for a thirty-minute agenda, and thirty minutes for feedback and response). Fourth, the Alpha group had no vested interest in the success of the project. A church group with established relationships and felt encouragement for the project to succeed, might result in biased supportive evaluation of the group. This could not be true of the Alpha teaching staff, in which there was perhaps a vested interest in demonstrating criticism of the procedure. The dominant factor in selecting Alpha as the initial group was that their evaluation could be accepted without question of bias. The Alpha group was also familiar with the feedback process. The teachers, having experienced videotape feedback, would be able

to give some indication of comparative impact of the process.

After three videotape sessions, a FAIRWITNESS introductory session was held with the teachers. The ten descriptors (graphed in the examples) were discussed, defined, and accepted by the group as being significant. It was decided that the observation would take place with these concepts, without adding others.

Through consensus, the group established their impression of the group standard session. The standard was not an ideal expression of what they should do; instead, Alpha preferred to base their standard on what their group behavior, in fact, generally was. The graph of their standard concept looked like this:

```

GRAPH *A
DECISION/CLOSURE      :
GATEKEEPING           :
SETTING STANDARDS      :
OPINION GIVING         :
INFORMATION SEEKING    :
CLARIFYING             :
INTRODUCTION           :
.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!.....!
DOMINATION             :
DIFFUSION              :
UNINVOLVEMENT         :

```

The group had a high, effective concept of themselves in their tightly structured agenda. The A is used above to denote Alpha's standard concept.

The group session with videotape-computer observation was held. The FAIRWITNESS team consisted of me at the terminal entering observations, a person at the videotape deck keeping a parallel written record, and a camera operator. In addition, we had a color videotape system and another operator making a videotape documentary of this

event. The second camera taped the FAIRWITNESS team in observation and feedback, and the resulting tape allowed evaluation and refinement of the personnel procedure.

The observed process of Alpha compared with their standard appeared as follows:

```

      GRAPH *A1
DECISION/CLOSURE      :                               A
GATEKEEPING           :                               A
SETTING STANDARDS     :                               AA
OPINION GIVING        :                               1*****AAAA
INFORMATION SEEKING:   : AAAAAAAAAA*****AAAAAA
CLARIFYING            :   AAAA1111111111
INTRODUCTION          : *1111
                      : ....!....!....!....!....!....!....!....!....!....!
DOMINATION            :
DIFFUSION             :
UNINVOLVEMENT        :                               111

```

The percentage bar graph was:

```

      GRAPH /1A
DECISION/CLOSURE      :                               A
GATEKEEPING           :                               A
SETTING STANDARDS     :                               AA
OPINION GIVING        : 1111111111111111            AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
INFORMATION SEEKING: 11111111            AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
CLARIFYING            : 111111111111111111            AAAA
INTRODUCTION          : 11111            A
                      : ....!....!....!....!....!....!....!....!....!....!
DOMINATION            :
DIFFUSION             :
UNINVOLVEMENT        : 111

```

Note the flow of events. There was an unwieldly amount of clarification required despite a fairly lengthy introduction of the problem.

The excessive clarification led to the uninvolvement late in the session, and finally adjournment without a definitive decision being reached. The amount of information-seeking pertinent to factual nature of the situation was less than the group would have anticipated.

The observer feedback centered on these concerns. One of the participants questioned where the clarification was observed. From the command "1 WHEN CL" the list 33, 59, 99 was generated. One of these segments was chosen and played. The teachers responded more enthusiastically than had been anticipated. There was challenge of some interpretation by some of the teachers, as is desirable, and there was acknowledgment of the helpfulness of both graphs. There was affirmation that the graphic display was more effective than videotape as an aid to understanding the group and the meeting. The evaluation of the observation team was similar. FAIRWITNESS was perceived by the observers and participants in an interactive developmental format as effective, illustrative, and powerful.

While videotape enabled Alpha members to see themselves, the computer graphics allowed them to understand the matrix of behavior comprising a group session. After the encouraging Alpha response, a notice was sent to some thirty institutions notifying them that the project was now ready for implementation and that a detailed procedure would be available. Since then the FAIRWITNESS tool has been demonstrated before a variety of groups, both in the church and in public institutions. The subjective response has been interest, encouragement and development. This tool facilitates moral development in an interactive developmental perspective. Through notice in periodicals, contact has been established with several church structures interested in the research.

What are the directions for the future of FAIRWITNESS? In the fall of 1976, nine persons from a mission church in Springfield,

Oregon, will become the basis for a thorough evaluation of FAIRWITNESS. When completed, the results will be published and the computer program will then be opened to all computers, institutions, and individuals who wish to use it. The OCRI Foundation has provided an ADDS computer terminal and videotape equipment for the Springfield project. Through local and national conference program funding, there will be monies for additional refinement of the computer program and connection costs for the computer. Since the developmental phase of FAIRWITNESS has been completed, the IBM computer is no longer available to us. The program is stored at the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, and beginning July 1976, FAIRWITNESS will have a functioning account paying for time and space used.

The four-year Lake Oswego Church project has demonstrated the refinement of videotape in enhancing group process and has facilitated the emergence of testing and establishing the first computer/videotape group service. The videotape group process work is now entirely in the hands of the laity of the Lake Oswego Church and they are enhancing moral development through this tool. This same kind of lay operation of the computer/videotape project planned for the Springfield church is called for.

There appears to be a viable option for the church in developmentalism that speaks to the immediate, real structures of church life. FAIRWITNESS meets the theoretical guidelines for enhancement of moral development. It will be interesting to note

its impact or lack of impact upon the imagination of the church and other institutions. FAIRWITNESS has enjoyed a good beginning; little else could be asked for.

Chapter VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Interactive developmentalism is a viable theoretical basis for understanding individual and group moral growth in the church.

Through Kohlberg's theory of moral judgment and its critique, it is clear that the basic concept of developmentalism is significant to the church's interest in and commitment to moral growth of individuals. The most helpful understanding of developmentalism is one which is first interactive. Interactive developmentalism allows exchange and challenge of interpretation and assumptions of participant and observer. It is both rational and emotional, speaking to the whole person involved in moral discernment. It is practical and deliberative. The moral dilemma sufficient for meaningful evaluation is that which considers the individual's experience and personal judgment. It is contextual and peer-directed. The moral enlivening of actual life involvement of an individual is found in context of the decisions that a person makes. The evaluation of that life decision making should be open to some form of sharing by those with whom those decisions are made--the barrier between theoretical formulation and action is broken.

The church should be involved in research in interactive moral development for persons of all ages. National funds should be made available for determining moral development of individuals by age level. It is important that the research not be confined to youth and their moral development, but include persons of all ages. While in a laboratory style procedure with classical, judgmental emphasis, youth may score better than adults; however, the interactive developmental reality is that persons do change in conceptual formulation and emotional response regardless of age.

Local church research and development in tools for moral development does not signify large economic commitment. The Lake Oswego Church was the center for the conception and the developmental stage of FAIRWITNESS at minimal cost. Through belief in the concept behind the research and intention, the computer programmers gave their time and effort. Through understanding the worth of the effort and the need for work space, the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry allowed computer space for the program to be written and rewritten. Through perceiving that the testing of the program could occur with their assistance, the International Business Machines Corporation allowed use of the IBM 5100. The research and development occurred because it had significance, not because there was large funding for the project. As to implementation costs, the OCRI Foundation has provided a permanent computer terminal costing \$2,700. The cost for the nonprofit connection costs with the Oregon Museum of

Science and Industry will be \$10 a month, plus phone bill. That is a reasonable expenditure of funds for a local church to assume once it has demonstrated that a concept researched and developed can be potentially of value on a broader basis. The local church being involved in tools such as FAIRWITNESS means commitment, rather than funding, on a massive scale.

The church should be sensitive to emerging tools for moral development. FAIRWITNESS is a type of such a tool. It is a type of problem-solving that brings the moral, ethical demands of the church to the emerging technologies of our society. The church should be sensitive to how such emerging tools (computer, videotape, microfiche) can assist in its purpose. Moreover, the church has the obligation to inform and reform emerging technology by its moral values. In testing FAIRWITNESS and demonstrating it subsequent to the Alpha group, the salesperson for IBM commented that for the first time in his work his wife approved of his career. For the first time his wife had seen involvement with technology helping people. That illustrates a challenge for the church. The church should remain sensitive to not only these tools, but the continuing presence of a variety of information and communication devices.

The FAIRWITNESS application of interactive developmentalism suggests that church administration is vitally involved in moral development. Traditionally, the church structures concerned with moral development have been education and social concerns/missions.

The implication of FAIRWITNESS is that the way in which we conduct our church business and life not only reflects our moral perspective and has moral quality, but that quality may be enhanced. The operation of the church is a moral venture. Through techniques such as FAIRWITNESS, church administrators can choose to bring forth and develop moral growth.

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